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NORWAY IN WORLD HISTORY

Publications by Dr. Keilhau

IN NORWEGIAN

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GRUNNRENTELAEREN (*The Theory of Rent*). 1916

VALUTATEORI OG VALUTAPOLITIKK (*Exchange Theory and Exchange Policy*). 1925

DET NORSKE FOLKS LIV OG HISTORIE 1814–1930 (*Life and History of the Norwegian People* 1814–1930). Four volumes. 1929–38

EUROPÉISKE PENGESYSTEMER ETTER 1914 (*European Monetary Systems after* 1914). 1930

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IN GERMAN

DIE WERTUNGSLEHRE (*The Theory of Value Estimations*). 1923

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THE COMEDY OF EVIL. 1943

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NORWAY IN WORLD HISTORY

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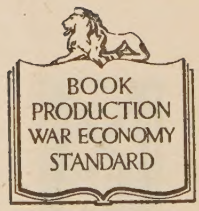

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PREFACE

HISTORY does not record any two years which presented mankind with graver and more complicated problems than those facing us in 1944 and 1945. If they are solved in a wise way, this century may still have in store for us greater security, greater prosperity and greater happiness than any previous age. But if the leaders of the world should be dominated by sensual lust of power or led astray by want of required knowledge, the powers of destruction will soon be let loose anew and carry us to the verge of the most stupid downfall since civilisation dawned upon our remote forefathers.

One of the difficult tasks ahead will be to find for each nation, small as well as great, a proper place within the framework of the new organisations which must be created primarily for the purpose of continued co-operation of the United Nations. Whoever desires to make a serious contribution to the discussion of such problems as are here involved will have to build not only upon a country's statistical data and economic potentialities, but also on knowledge of its past, with a special view to the part it has played in world history. For it is a fact that every man or woman who possesses sufficient mental power to influence national decisions houses, in his or her subconsciousness, a great number of ideas derived from history, and out of this personal historical "underground" emerge daily impulses and emotions. Among the Mediterranean and Atlantic peoples in particular, as well as among the Chinese, history is in that way a forceful factor of the present and the future. It would be dangerous to underestimate this.

My little book represents an effort, within its limited space of 200 pages, to expound and elucidate the history of Norway, as seen in universal perspective. It contains an epic drama in two grand acts with a tragic interlude. If interpreted in a didactic way, a definite conclusion may be drawn from it. We learn that the national individuality of the Norwegian people was formed and developed in those periods when the

country, in some way or another, maintained constant and lively intercourse with all the Atlantic powers, whilst it decayed and declined during the five centuries in which Denmark and Sweden succeeded in keeping Norway within a narrow circle of Nordic isolation. Possibly historical philosophers will be able to trace the trend of a general law in this cycle of evolution.

The twofold character of the Norwegian people can only be explained as the result of such history. We are one of the oldest nations of the world, but, nevertheless, we still feel young. The fact is that our people have lived in the country of Norway at least in all post-glacial epochs, but only 130 years have elapsed since our national rebirth in 1814.

Norway's relations to world history are economic, social and cultural as well as political. I have tried to draw the outlines in all these four main fields of human activities. In my opinion, such procedure will be necessary if causal relations are to be revealed, for real life is always synthetic, and I have no doubt that just as modern war has become total war, modern history will become total history.

Norway in World History was written in London during the winter 1943–44. I had, consequently, no access to the material of Norwegian libraries and archives. Possible mistakes in details should find sufficient excuse in these circumstances. But I hope that the ideas of the book will not be affected by possible minor corrections.

On one point, however, new information has reached me after the completion of the compositor's work. In the first chapter I have pointed to the possibility that human beings lived along the shores of Norway even at the time when the great glacier covered the whole interior of the country. I learn that finds from the occupation years have transformed that possibility into a certainty. The proud title of my first chapter seems, therefore, in the light of these last investigations to be a little too modest. Maybe the correct headline should read: "A History of 10,000 years."

At the same time as the latest finds have thus added a new first chapter to the history of Norway, events are adding a new last chapter. Even before my book can reach its readers, " the liberation of Norway " may be an accomplished fact. But there is no need for me to write that chapter.

WILHELM KEILHAU.

London, the 18th of September, 1944.

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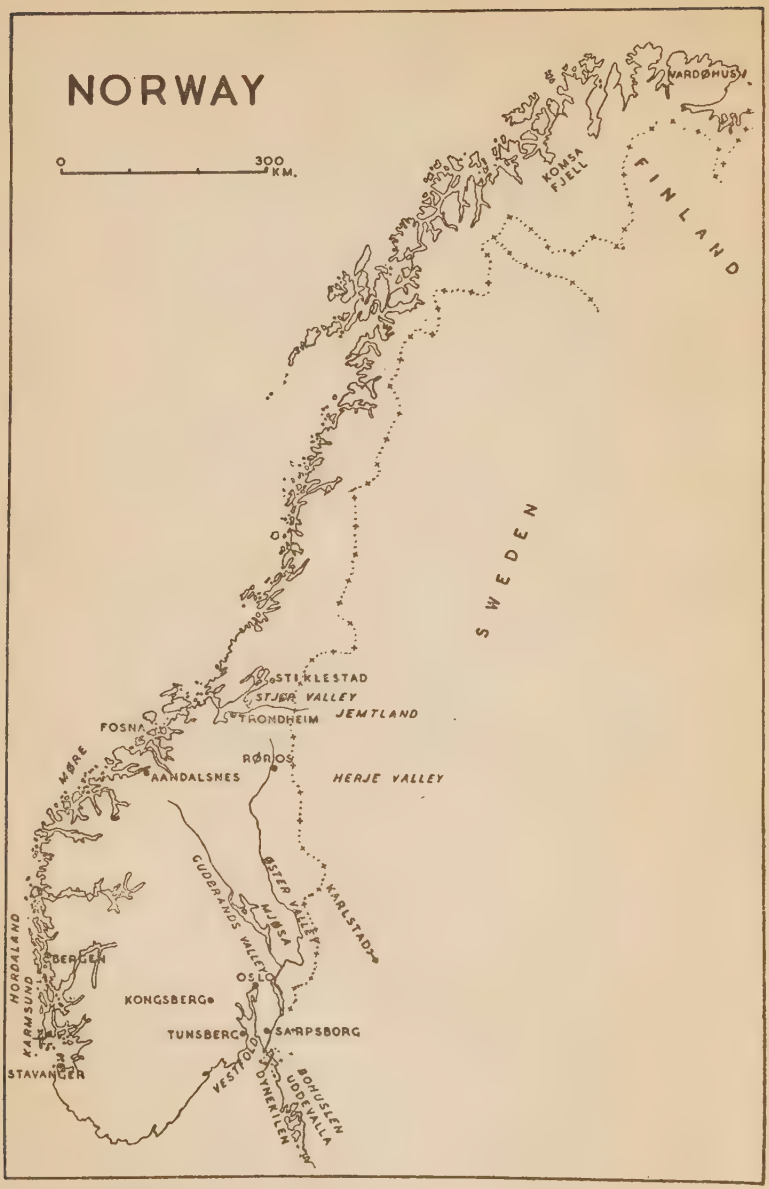
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TUNSBERG
SARPSBORG
STAVANGER
VESTFOLD
BOHUSLEN
LODDVALLA
DYNEKILEN

NORWAY IN WORLD HISTORY

I

A HISTORY OF 8,000 YEARS

If we adopt the phraseology of the fourth gospel, the history of Norway opens with these words: "In the beginning was the ice." Only when the great inland glacier of the last pleistocene epoch slowly withdrew, did the country appear in its present shape, rising "furrowed, weather-beaten above the sea," as it is depicted in our national anthem. Eastwards and northwards withdrew the glacier, but mostly northwards. As the open land followed, filled by moraines and crossed by icy rivulets, it was, in the most real sense, a "Northway," although this ancient name of the country has certainly not been derived from any surviving recollection of glacial times.

According to a Swedish calculation of the parallel development in the eastern part of the Scandinavian peninsula, the open land took four years to advance a mile. The pace was probably about the same in Norway. At first sight such progress would seem infinitesimal. But we have to bear in mind the enormous thickness of the ice and the compressed hardness of its bottom strata. During the millenniums the sun gained a complete victory: all the "eternal" ice and snow melted away, and big backwoods covered the whole of the country. The trees and bushes even realised, to its fullest extent, that bold aim they placed before themselves in Björnson's prose poem: they "dressed" the naked mountains. But towards the commencement of the Christian era the Norwegian climate grew colder again. In the winters snow and ice began to reappear. Spring and summer were still vigorous. Nevertheless, a number of new small glaciers survived from year to year, and the mountain peaks covered their heads with eternal snow-caps. Norway became a country of violent seasonal changes, and has remained so until this day. Each winter appears as a

shortlived pleistocene epoch, and each spring as a rebirth of life and vegetation, whilst summer and autumn represent hectic interglacial periods. No wonder that the four seasons play a predominant part in Norse folklore and poetry, the spring being regarded as the true symbol of the always reviving national spirit.

Even during the ice age itself a narrow brim along the open ocean seems to have escaped glaciation, and here human beings could have defied the eternal winter, living under conditions not unlike those still prevailing along the coasts of Greenland. But no archaeological excavations have yet been able to prove the existence of the "glacial man" in Norway. The first traces left by human beings belong to periods later than the ice age. They consist of rich finds of flints, as well as some remnants of artifacts made of antlers and other bones. Modern archaeologists are of opinion that they were used in very primitive habitations about 6000 years B.C. The most typical implements from this age were found near the old Fosna, on the north-west coast, and at Komsa, in Finmark; in accordance with the archaeological principle of denotation, the first period of Norway's history is, therefore, called the epoch of the Fosna culture and the Komsa culture.

A great part of the flints from these cultures consists of small chipped pieces, shapeless but sharp, obviously used for scraping and cutting. Some of them, however, were better fashioned. We know two kinds of these more perfect flints: burins used for work in bone, and small auxiliary instruments to be fixed to weapons of bone, "microlits" as they are called by archaeologists. As suggested by Haakon Shetelig, in the first volume of *The Life and History of the Norwegian People*, these burins and microlits give us the clue to an understanding of Norway's oldest culture: the technical treatment of the flints was so imperfect because all finer tools were made of antlers and other bones. Archaeology has, therefore, baptised this early period "the bone age."

In Norway very few bone implements have been found with the flints, as the damp climate has dissolved all organic matter left near to the primitive coastal habitations. But scattered finds from other places have given us sufficient information

of their character: most of these remnants of the bone culture consist of weapons. This sounds rather bellicose. It would, however, be a false deduction to conclude, from the discoveries of such ancient bone weapons, that the aborigines of Norway belonged to pugnacious tribes. The fact is that those primitives, besides being fishermen, were ardent hunters, and all their weapons seem to have served hunting purposes: what we have found are mainly gaffs, harpoons and arrows. To raise a general problem, it is, perhaps, not too daring to assert that weapons, as a rule, were originally invented as auxiliary instruments for fights against wild beasts and chase; only when game grew scarce man began to hunt his fellow-creatures: the warrior is the son of the hunter. In Norway, in any case, typical war-weapons date from a much more recent period than the flint-chipped hunting implements of the bone age: the most ancient combat instruments excavated in Norwegian soil are the battle-axes, found in strata from about 2500 years B.C., or 3,500 years later than the oldest gaffs, harpoons and arrows.

A current theory argues that such battle-axes were introduced by new peoples who forced their way into countries already possessing an ancient culture of their own. But it is not probable that they ever undertook a warlike invasion of Norway; at least, no evidence of such an exploit has yet been found. On the contrary, the scattered occurrence of the oldest battle-axes seems to indicate that they were peacefully imported from Sweden and Denmark, like so many other instruments of those ancient ages. As far as we know, no hostile tribe has ever expelled or subjugated the indigenous population of Norway; the various immigrations that took place from time to time, and which Mr. Carleton Stevens Coon has tried to reconstruct, in a work of 1939, seem to have been peaceful, and the immigrants blended with the aborigines.

Only two tribes of later arrival belonged to completely foreign anthropological types. These were the Lapps, or "Samelets," and the Finns, or "Kvener," who settled in Northern Norway during rather recent periods; Mr. Coon thus maintains that the Lapps immigrated about A.D. 900, and the Finns even later. But these alien elements have not

been able to play any part in Norwegian history, and they have remained surprisingly few in number. According to the census of 1930, the Norwegian population was then 2,784,090; out of that grand total only 19,108 were Lapps, 7,804 Finns and 1,797 Lapp-Finns, whilst 11,969 Norwegians were supposed to have Lappish or Finnish blood in them. It is probable that one or two smaller tribes from the south settled in Norway during the period of the Great Migration, but they were racially akin to the aborigines, and must, in any case, soon have been absorbed by the national population. All other immigration to Norway has been that of families or individuals, and practically all immigrants have been assimilated after one or two generations. The Norwegian people is, therefore, to a unique degree, one and homogeneous; and if we include the lessons of archaeology, this nation has a continuous history of 8,000 years.

II

NORWAY'S PATH FROM FLINT TO IRON

MODERN archaeology still uses the tripartition of ancient times which was suggested by Christien Thomsen in 1836: it speaks of stone age, bronze age and iron age. In Norway the stone age lasts until about 1800 years B.C, beginning with the "bone age" and ending with a "neolithic" period, characterised by the use of a grinding and polishing technique in tool-making and the manufacture of axes. The bronze age covers some 1,300 years, the iron age commencing about 500 years B.C.

Norway is extremely mountainous and stony; with sad satisfaction Henrik Ibsen writes, in his poem to Edvard Grieg: "Our country has a sufficiency of stones." But not all kinds of stones are raw materials for primitive tools or weapons. On the contrary, as "economic goods" stones are scarce, also, in Norway. It may even be said with tragic irony: particularly in Norway. Thus, our forefathers were able to find only scattered flints of inferior quality. But large flocks of reindeer strayed along the mountain crests, and provided the skilful hunter with well-shaped antlers. No wonder that "palaeolithic time" in Norway presented itself as the "bone age." However, about 4000 years B.C. the population had learned also to use other varieties of hard stones for their technical purposes. To begin with, they found such stone material in the gravel of the moraines. Later, they quarried the stone from the mountains themselves. Norwegian archaeologists denote the totality of this industry, and the economic life attached to it, as the "Nöstvet culture," because the first find from the period consisted of a thick, bowy axe from Nöstvet, south of Oslo. Two particular types of stones achieved popularity during the neolithic age: grorudite and greenstone. The new industry centred round grorudite quarries near Oslo and greenstone quarries in Hordaland, on the west coast. Tools and weapons from these two centres were used all over the country. We have to draw a strange

but significant conclusion: home trade was an important economic activity in Norway even 6,000 years ago.

How can that have been possible? Impenetrable backwoods covered the lower parts of the country, pathless mountains separated valley from valley, and deep bridgeless rivers were impassable a great part of the year. Besides, nowhere could a traveller find prepared shelters against the wild forces of Nordic weather. Longer transports by land were certainly practically impossible. But the waters along the Norwegian coast are easy to row or sail. Thousands of islands, skerries and rocks form a natural bulwark against the storms of the open ocean; protected behind them, boats and vessels can pass smoothly through that long channel which is called fairway, or "lead" (the latter word was used by the British Admiralty in October, 1943, as a direct translation of the Norwegian expression); here even the frail craft of the stone age stood a chance of rather regular passages. Already, in those early days, Norwegian seamen apparently carried on a sort of cabotage.

The industrial production of tools in the neolithic stone age made it possible for parts of the population to penetrate through the backwoods into the interior of the country, and establish themselves there. The introduction of two new economic activities accompanied this geographical expansion: pasturage of domesticated animals and tillage of the ground. From about 2000 years B.C. cattle, sheep, goats and swine were kept all over Norway, and barley was grown. The peasant appeared as a new type besides the fisherman and the hunter. In some districts real farms came into existence.

Flint, antlers, grorudite and greenstone being the raw materials of this original Norwegian culture, we have to conclude that the technical basis of Norway's production during the stone age was national—somewhat poor in palaeolithic and richer in neolithic times. It was otherwise during the bronze age. The ingenious invention of smelting copper and hardening it by alloying it with tin was made centuries before any bronze implement reached Norway, and bronze was not produced on Norwegian soil. But there has been found, on the northwest coast, a half-finished and somewhat mis-shapen axe

from about 1700 B.C. No implement was ever imported in such a shabby state. The weapon had surely been cast on the spot, where it was found some 3,600 years later. Other finds make it probable that by gradual degrees a widespread and important Norwegian bronze industry was developed. It depended wholly on raw materials from abroad. Foreign trade served as a substitute for national production, and did it so well that the bronze age became a period of prosperity in Norway. If the bronze age men of Norway had written economics, they would, therefore, have been induced to launch a much more advanced theory of economic policy than those doctrines which were propagated by the Nazis in the 1930's after Christ.

The iron age re-created a national basis for technical production, as iron ore occurs all over Norway. Thus, it is easily found in our bogs, swamps and mires. At such places the "iron blast" was conducted. The labourers dug a funnel-shaped cavity in the earth, lined it with clay and fixed bellows at both sides of the opening. In this cavity the ore was burnt, with fuel additions from time to time and vigorous blast from the bellows. After some hours the glowing ball of reduced iron had to be pulled out and immediately, while still white hot, hammered forcefully to expel as much slag as possible, and to weld the hot particles into a coherent mass. Iron produced by this method was still impure, but good enough for most purposes of that age, and a skilful use of the bellows heightened the quality of the metal. Nevertheless, "iron blast" did not emerge as a profession of its own, but was carried on all over the country by the peasants themselves. In terms of economics "iron blast" did not crystallise as a special industry such as the quarrying of the neolithic stone age, but became an integral part of land cultivation. It followed that iron, as raw material, did not add to the volume of trade. Indeed, the substitution of iron for bronze discouraged both trade and shipping. This may be one of the causes of the surprising fact that the early iron age in Norway was a period of depression and decay.

Mr. T. D. Kendrick, who in his standard work on the Vikings even speaks of a sudden collapse to an enfeebled and

backward culture, also thinks that a decline in trade was among the factors that caused the downfall. But he attributes this decline not to changes in technical and economic conditions, but to "the growth of the great Celtic confederacy that was now established across, and controlled, the accustomed trade-routes." He rejects the suggestion that the Celts were actuated by some special hostility towards the men of the north, but finds it doubtless that "the Celts, during the period of their maximum power and widest expansion (Vth–IIIrd century B.C.), usurped for themselves the greater part of the trade that had hitherto found its way to the north." This theory does not contradict our statement that the transition to iron weakened the want for import to Norway. On the contrary, a decrease in Norwegian demand for foreign weapons and implements must have made it easier for the Celts to absorb a growing part of the north-going export of the Mediterranean countries. They were also helped by the fact that the Norwegians of the bronze age did not possess ships suitable for trade overseas.

The downfall of a culture has, however, seldom, if ever, been due to one cause alone. Great historic events are always results of fateful coincidences. The collapse of Norwegian prosperity in the early iron age offers no exception to this general rule. Besides the decline in trade, embarrassing and depressing as it certainly was, another and still more serious misfortune visited the Norwegian people: it was in those days that the climate began to grow colder again, and, as Professor Hasund has shown, economic life in Norway at the end of the bronze age was most vulnerable towards any decrease in temperature.

Our early settlers had been accustomed to endure the hardships of rough and winterly weather. They procured their livelihood by gathering crustaceas and molluscs, fishing and hunting. A fall of some few degrees in the average temperature did not affect, to any great extent, their food-acquiring capacity. Besides, their primitive settlements were all situated along the shore, and, thanks to the Gulf Stream, the climate of the coast continued to be littoral. Consequently, those inhabitants that still clung to the economic habits of the stone

age withstood the deterioration of climatic conditions, and—as shown by the modern Norwegian archaeologist, Professor A. W. Brögger—a considerable part of the population did not leave the neolithic stage during the centuries of the bronze age. But the typical bronze culture of Norway is identified with a flourishing of pasturage. The mild climate made it possible for the animals to graze in the open all year round. A new efficient assistant for tillage was found in the horse. All in all, the bronze age belonged to the peasant. But his way of producing and living was dependent on the snowless winters. When fields and woods were again covered with that cold and hostile stuff, he did not know what to do. We have to suppose that a great number of his animals perished each polar winter. At last a considerable part of the interior districts was evacuated. Migration took place: from north towards south, from the highland to the coast. During the early iron age the actual Norway decreased in size.

But, in the long run, the iron helped to overcome the climatic difficulties. In one way, and one way only, could the people protect themselves against the approaching polar enemy: by building houses that could keep the cold outdoors and give sufficient shelter to men, domestic animals and food stocks. Now, the new iron tools were much more suitable for felling trees, lopping off twigs, peeling off bark and erecting wooden walls than were any axes of stone or bronze. In the early days the settlers had feared the woods. The iron axe conquered the woods, and made the trees useful friends. But we can only guess—or rather deduce—this development, for the most ancient finds that allow safe conclusions concerning buildings in Norway do not date farther back than to about A.D. 400. We possess, however, one most interesting literary evidence of the fact that some agricultural labour in Norway was done indoors rather soon after the change of climate. The geographer Strabo, who lived in the last century before Christ, quotes the following lines from the world-famous explorer Pytheas, of Marseilles, who visited Norway for research purposes as early as about 330 B.C.: "In the territories near to the cold zone, there are no finer fruits, and only few animals; the people live from millet, vegetables, wild

fruits and roots; but those who possess cereals and honey, make a beverage thereof. However, because they have no clear sunshine, they thresh the corn in large buildings after they have gathered the ears there, for if they threshed in the open, the corn would not be fit for use, owing to the want of sun, and the rain-showers."

To begin with, animals and men seem generally to have lived under the same roof, although probably separated from each other by partitive walls. Later on, special outhouses were built for each kind of animal as well as for grain stores and other stocks. Every newly-married couple of the upper classes tried to have a number of such houses erected round their farmyard. Norway became the country of the many small buildings.

III

THE DAWN OF NORWEGIAN ART AND POETRY

THE artist is an ancient type of the human species. Thus, it is an established fact that in Norway he appeared at least centuries before the peasant. We know about twenty engravings and four paintings from the stone age, every one of them stamped by the ideas of hunters. These engravings have been found on plane, precipitous mountain-sides. Nearly all of them represent wild animals, drawn in contours only, but with deepened lines. As far as we can understand to-day, they were, in most cases, chopped out by means of dot-hewing with a sharp-edged stone; in some instances they were apparently whetted into the flat mountain wall. Only one of the engravings seems to have been cut by a burin. The paintings, like the engravings, are drawn in mere outlines, with red or dark-red colours.

Whilst the few human forms of the stone age pictures are quite schematic, the best of the animals are reproduced in a vivid and vigorous naturalistic style. The elks, in particular, seem to have attracted the watchful eyes of the artists. Even their characteristic movements are sometimes expressed, in spite of the hard material.

Professor A. W. Brögger has pointed out that the places of these remarkable finds may be taken as symptoms of the artist's real intentions. The pictures are generally found near steeps and precipices, where fleeing animals could easily tumble over and be killed. In his opinion the drawings were meant to be magic spells, purposing to lead the wild beasts astray through some occult incantation. Whether this be a true theory or only an ingenious misconception, nobody can deny that the engravers and painters were artists also, who used their best capacities to give lifelike and characteristic reproductions. Their works speak sufficiently for their artistic feelings. We find again the same naturalistic style, and a similar apprehension of characteristic forms, in some small bone sculptures that have been discovered in stone age caves.

Theoretically, it might have been expected that the bronze age, with its richer and more comprehensive culture, would have represented a further development of the stone age art, adding new objects to the motives, and greater refinement to the technical execution. But, on the contrary, the engravings from Norwegian bronze age are poor and primitive. Artistic decay seems to have accompanied economic prosperity. Almost all figures of the bronze age are skeleton-like, clumsy and lifeless; they give only schematic representations of their objects. What is the reason for this strange phenomenon?

One might try to find the explanation in the fact that the peasant was the dominating type of the bronze age whilst the stone age man had been a seafarer and a hunter; it cannot be denied that cows and sheep appeal less to imagination than elks and bears. However, not all bronze age men were peasants. The hunter remained, and proud wild animals were still masters of the backwoods. A materialistic interpretation seems, on the whole, difficult to find. The artistic differences between the two ages had, more probably, their causes in the world of ideas. A change of style had occurred. The artists turned from naturalism to symbolism; their aim was no longer to reproduce reality, but to typify emblems. They were servants of a religious cult; what they intended to create were abstract figures of ritual significance: a ship as such, a wheel as such, dancing priestesses as such. Deliberately they abstained from equipping their imaginary beings and things with disturbing individualistic features.

From pure symbolism in drawing and painting to ornamental art in handicraft there is but a short step. Finds from the Norwegian bronze age prove once more this interrelation. Almost every weapon and every implement of metal from that period, found in Norwegian soil, tells of skill and taste in adornment. So do the bronze necklaces, belts and rings. Some specimens of that ancient musical instrument, the alphorn, possess an elegancy of form and embellishment that cannot be surpassed. Even measured by modern standards the artisans of the Norwegian bronze age were real artists.

Only recent finds have made it possible for our archaeologists to give a characterisation of the bronze age in Norway. In

doing so they have added a most significant feature to Norwegian history, as comparisons with later periods make it clear that the style of the bronze age determined the development of Norwegian art and handicraft. Whilst naturalistic art, after its interesting beginnings in the stone age, experienced no remarkable revival until the XIXth century A.D., Norwegian art and handicraft never lost contact with that sense of decorativeness which was born in the bronze age. Thus, the imported alloy of copper and tin presented the people of Norway with that material in which national artistic feeling seems to have found its first lasting expression.

Even as late as at the time of the Roman emperors, brooches and other feminine adornments in Norway were made of bronze. But the great artistic problem of the iron age consisted in transferring the ornamental style of the bronzes to other materials. Many finds tell us that blacksmiths, as well as silversmiths and goldsmiths, succeeded in overcoming the difficulties of this change; their filigrees, in particular, are sometimes refined and beautiful. In pottery, also, the traditional decorative style was used, partly influenced by the ceramic art of the Romans. The greatest achievement of the artisans of the iron age was, however, the transference of the ornamental ideas to the national material: wood; here new possibilities of variations were opened, and Norwegian woodcarving reached during the centuries an extraordinary richness and many-sidedness. Xylography became a typical national art. Not only implements and furniture were equipped with wood engravings, but also boats and ships were decorated in a most fantastic way. The excavated Viking ships are the most exquisite types of this original art that have been revealed.

For all we know, Norwegian poetry may be as ancient as Norwegian art. But if poetry shall survive, not only through centuries but through millenniums, it must be kept in written form. The old Norwegians were, however, as far as we can ascertain, complete analphabets. An inscription found with a bronze age engraving in Nordfjord, on the west coast, was, apparently, added several centuries later. Our archaeologists

are of opinion that the most ancient inscription found in Norway dates from about A.D. 200; it reads "Rauninga," engraved on a spearhead from Stabu, in Toten, west of Lake Mjösa.

This name was carved in the special alphabet called the "earlier runes." It consists of twenty-four letters, divided up into three groups of eight each. At a later period it was called the "futhark," after its six initial letters, the "th" being a letter of its own. These runes bear some resemblance to the capitals of the Latin alphabet, and may have been influenced by them. But the origin of the runes is still disputed. A modern Norwegian theory, launched by C. J. S. Marstrander in 1928, tries to explain them as derivations from a late Northern Etruscan alphabet, which contained most of the Latin letters, but also some national ones, signifying sounds that were alien to the Latin tongue. Whether their origin be this or not, the "earlier runes" seem to have received their special sharp forms in an effort to make more ancient letters better fit for being engraved in stone. It is significant that they underwent, in the long run, a further simplification, which must have made them still easier to use for stone-hewers and stone-cutters. Thus there appeared various systems of "later runes;" the Swedish-Norwegian runic alphabet was even reduced to sixteen letters, symbolised by very primitive lines.

Most of the inscriptions found until this day were carved on monolithic tombstones ("bautasteiner"), on weapons and on small tools. In many cases the magic meaning of the engraved words is quite obvious, and some archaeologists have forwarded the theory that the runes were nothing but a special magic writing. Any such assertion seems, however, to be most daring. A system of secret signs would probably have been much more complicated than the runes, and if sorcerers had directed the development of such an esoteric alphabet, they would, in an endeavour to keep their art for themselves, certainly have tried to make the letters more complex instead of simplifying them. Besides, for all we know, the runes may have been used for a number of other purposes than the carving of epitaphs and amulet inscriptions. Even

some of the epitaphs seem to be purely descriptive, simply stating the name of the buried person. It is more than difficult to surmise a hidden esoteric meaning in matter-of-fact sentences of such content.

No poetry has been handed down to us in runic script. We know a number of lays that must have been composed in the centuries of the runes. But the most ancient collection of these was, according to the Icelandic tradition of the Middle Ages, made by Saemund Sigfusson the Wise, who lived at Oddi, in the south-western part of Iceland, from about 1056 to 1133. Apparently, it was from him that Snorre Sturlason, in a work dating from about 1220, quoted lines and even whole stanzas of the ancient chants. But Saemund's anthology itself had disappeared, and the old poetry was thought lost for ever. Then, in 1643, the Bishop of Skolholt, Brynjolf Sveinsson, discovered a manuscript, clearly written as early as 1300, containing twenty-nine poems, some of them complete, others apparently fragmentary; and to his great satisfaction he retrieved Snorre's quotations in the pages of the old book. Snorre's work had been called "Edda," and the bishop found it appropriate to denote the anthology as "Saemund's Edda." Under this name it has been known ever since. But what does "Edda" mean? Opinions have differed. The famous German collector of fairty-tales, Jacob Grimm, explained it as a sort of pet name for "great grandmother," and the Romantic school in Germany gave credit to this interpretation, which was described as "wonderful" and "deep." In our own times, an Icelandic author, Eirik Magnusson, has revealed a fact which gives a more matter-of-fact explanation, namely that "Edda" is the genitive form of "Oddi," Snorre's as well as Saemund's homestead. According to Magnusson, "Edda" is simply an abbreviation for "the book of Oddi." The Icelanders often referred to literary works in such a way.

Modern editions of "the older Edda," or "the poetic Edda," generally include not only the twenty-nine poems found by the Bishop of Skolholt in 1643, but also four other lays which were discovered even later, and one whole poem handed down by Snorre. These thirty-four chants comprise all the remaining relics of ancient Norse poetry. Their very existence

proves, however, that poetry must have flourished among the Norwegians and their descendants between the years 800 and 1200, which is held to be the period of their composition, for poems of such artistic perfection are never pioneer works. But their authors are forgotten men. We do not even know whether the verses of "Edda" have been handed down to us in their original conception or have been remodelled, or revised, by later critics. The Icelandic author Finnur Jònsson remarks, in one of his treatises from the 1930's, that the anthologist himself has shown a certain tendency to present each of the poems as a "saga in verses," having obviously inserted some stanzas from other ancient lays in order to round off the exposition. But we should not grumble at Saemund Sigfusson for this seeming sacrilege, as the insertions comprise some of the most powerful and characteristic lines of the whole "Edda."

The anthology begins with religious, cosmogonic and didactic poems, whilst the latter part of the collection consists of heroic eposes, most of them with introductions, commentaries and concluding explanations in prose. Among the religious chants we find monologues, whilst some of the heroic poems present themselves in the form of dialogues.

"Voluspo" (Vàluspà) is the headline of the opening "Edda" poem. In Professor Hollander's translation it reads: "The Prophecy of the Seeress." This poem is the most forceful of the "Edda" monologues. Speaking is an old "volve," a priestess of clairvoyant powers. She tells of the great empty space, "Ginnungagap," that was in the beginning. Nine worlds were created. On the earth man fought his way, under the supervision of the gods and the three goddesses of fate, the "nornes": Urd, Verdandi and Skuld. But the life of mankind is limited. There will come a last day, a "Ragnarokk." When it approaches, terrible world-wide wars will rage; forgetting even the laws of brotherhood, man will turn his weapons against anyone. In vehement words this time is described:

Axe-time, sword-time, shields cleaving,
wind-time, wolf-time, ere the world crumbles.

And then

> Sun darkens, earth sinks in sea.
> Whirled from the sky are the bright stars.
> Gushes forth smoke and gutting fire.
> Flames leap high to heaven itself.

But Ragnarokk does not mean the end of times. A new world will emerge. "Gimle" is its name. The old gods will reappear and reign over Gimle in perfect happiness. This last prophecy is given in words that remind one of the Apocalypse.

On the whole, the cosmogony of "Voluspo" is, in many ways, universal human. But its description of the gods gives a rather original picture. Odin, the supreme god, is wise but not omniscient, powerful but not omnipotent. He never takes any important decision alone, but refers the matter to a council of gods which assembles at "Idavoll." This is told in a recurrent half-strophe; in the somewhat free translation by Henry Adams Bellows it reads thus:

> Then sought the gods their assembly seats,
> the holy ones, and council held.

In reality, "Voluspo" depicts a rather democratic society of gods, and the position of Odin resembles very much that of a modern prime minister who presides over a cabinet of colleagues. The other gods have their own divine departments to look after, Thor being minister of war and Idun female minister of health. Other lays in "Edda" confirm these statements of "Voluspo." Thus, "the Dreams of Baldr" opens with the following double-line:

> To the assembly forthwith fared all gods.

Next in interest to "Voluspo" comes another monologue, "Haavamaal" (Hàvamàl), "the Lesson of the High One." Speaking here is Odin himself, giving good advice and rules of social etiquette. We learn from his sentences that the

ancient Norwegians knew very strict conventions for gentlemanly behaviour.

Among the probable insertions in "Haavamaal" we find those lines from our ancient poetry which are most commonly quoted in modern Norway:

> Cattle die,
> kinsmen die;
> you'll have to die, yourself.
> One thing I know
> that never dies:
> the doom over each one dead.

The heroic eposes of "Edda" are partly legendary, partly pseudo-historic. Most of them have taken their material from events outside Norway, or foreign fairy-tales. We have to conclude that, at the time of their composition, Norwegians were in lively exchange of thoughts with other nations. That great scholar Sophus Bugge proved, in publications from the 1870's and the 1880's, that even the cosmogonic and religious "Edda" lays had received strong influences from Great Britain and Ireland; in his view, the old-Norwegian mythology had found its final form at a time when the ideas of Christianity, in more or less legendary shapes, had begun their influx. He stressed, particularly, that the tales of the mild, pious god Baldr bear a strange resemblance to the apocryphal gospel of Nicodemus. Modern researchers, who have corrected the chronology of Bugge, are inclined to reject his conclusions also, apparently not being aware of the logical difficulties in explaining the proved similarity in any other way than as a result of Christian influence on the composers of the lays; these critics have, indeed, the laws of probability completely against them.

On the other hand, German authors have tried to vindicate the old Norwegian mythology for their own nation, arguing that the "Edda" poems are expressions of a mythical and mystical "Germanic spirit," being the common source of an original Teutonic and Nordic culture. The fact that gods and heroes from the "Edda" appear in Richard Wagner's

operas has strengthened the propaganda power of this modern legend. But there is no reason for taking the German contention seriously. The "Edda" poems are composed in the old Norwegian tongue, and bear every stamp of national Norwegian origin. It should be admitted that Icelanders may have added to them, and given them a finishing touch; besides, Icelanders alone deserve the credit for their penning and later rediscovery; without the Icelanders they would have been lost to history. But in the early days the Icelanders were nothing but Norwegian emigrants, and even at the times of Saemund and Snorre they had not cut their Norwegian navel string.

When discussing the nationality of the "Edda" poems, it is, also, worth while to remember that they have the same strophic structure and rhythmic style as the Norwegian-Icelandic poetry of the Middle Ages. An unbroken line leads from the verses of the older "Edda" to the lays of the "skalds." It is also significant that the metaphorical expressions of the "Edda" chants and the skaldic stanzas belong to precisely the same type. In old Norse poetics such metaphors were called "kennings." They appear to have been, as a rule, more stylised than spontaneous. The use of the term "sail-steed" to signify a ship, or "helm-tree" to signify a warrior, was regarded by the ancient Norsemen as good and legitimate poetic wording. At a later stage of development the mode even claimed that essential material things in the poems, as well as the more well-known persons, should not be mentioned by their right names, but only by some far-fetched and artificially-constructed periphrases. In the long run the skalds simply formed a language of their own. But when the kennings were stereotyped they lost their imaginative power. The skald lays estranged themselves from naturalism just as much as the pictures of the bronze age, the kennings appearing as special constant emblems, like the abstract drawings of the ancient symbolism. In this way, the skald lays became ornamental and decorative; they may be perceived as a parallel phenomenon to the national wood-carvings and other engravings. On the whole, the Norwegians and the Icelanders of medieval times seem

to have attached greater importance to the artistic than to the poetic side of poetry, and in their writings they repeatedly refer to the composition of verses as an art.

To us it may seem strange that the Norwegian-Icelandic poetry, in a period of growing culture, moved away from that visionary force and genuine expressiveness which made the "Edda" poems a grand contribution to literature. But we are children of our own times, as the skalds were children of theirs. We are influenced by a tendency to reserve the verse for expressions of emotional sensitiveness. The skaldic poems had other and far more important purposes. In the pre-book days man's mind was his sole library. Culture was then wholly dependent on memory, and the verse has this enormous advantage over prose, that it is ten thousand times easier to learn and remember. It was, therefore, of supreme cultural and national importance to have told in verses the people's whole basis of religious, moral and historic knowledge. The skalds were teachers and historians just as much as poets or artists. When they preferred to use traditional strophic frames and well-known metres, it was certainly not because they lacked prosodic imagination, but because they intended to facilitate the learning, remembering and reciting of the lays. Stereotyped metaphors and strictly-observed rules of alliteration served the same intention. We have also to admit that the skalds succeeded in making their poems a part of everyman's mental possession. The skaldic lays were for centuries an object of national meditation, and they handed down to posterity authentic knowledge of important events. Their service to history can hardly be overestimated. As early as in the XIIIth century, the great Icelandic saga-writer Snorre Sturlason constantly referred to the skaldic lays as the oldest and most reliable historic sources. Critical Norwegian historians of the 1920's and 1930's came to the same conclusion. Thus we see that authors like Edvard Bull and Halvdan Koht have used skaldic lays as instruments for verifying and correcting the tales of the sagas themselves.

IV

ORIGIN OF NORWEGIAN NATIONALITY AND DEMOCRACY

WHILST the history of the Norwegian people comprises about 8,000 years, the Norwegian State dates back only to the latter part of the IXth century A.D. But even the earliest geographers who described the peninsula between the Atlantic and the Baltic, "Scandinavia," seem to have realised that this far-stretching mainland of its own embraces two separate countries, one western and one eastern. References to Norway are otherwise also found in the works of ancient authors who have no idea of the real geographical structure of the northern countries.

"Thule" was the name given by Pytheas to that part of the world where he landed after six days' north-easterly sailing from the Shetlands, but we do not know whether this appellation refers to the whole country or only to some minor unit; nor do we know the origin of the word. A very German professor of the XIXth century denied, by the way, that Pytheas ever reached Norway, but his expositions only prove that he knew much less about navigation, astronomy and northern geography than the explorer who made his pioneer voyage more than 2,000 years earlier. Fridtjof Nansen, that great modern successor to Pytheas, found the old geographer's descriptions perfectly adequate, when applied to Norway. After having verified all the astronomical measurements of Pytheas, Nansen concludes with the following remark: "All the statements about Thule which have been preserved, answer to Norway, but to no other country."

The Roman polymath Pliny the Elder, who died A.D. 79, seems to have referred his term "Thyle" to northern Norway only; he mentions also "Nerigon" as a country of the north; the Norwegian historian Rudolf Keyser suggested, in 1839, that this word may be a corruption of "Northravegr," "Northway," the oldest national name of the whole country, which the English language has retained until this day, only with a very slight alteration, and which even is

the primordial form of the present Norwegian appellation: "Norge." If Keyser was right in his hypothesis, the name of the country is almost a thousand years older than the State.

In the Viking raids warriors from Denmark and Norway fought, as a rule, side by side, like brothers in arms. But they seem almost always to have considered themselves as belonging to two different nationalities, and also the contemporary historic sources of the invaded countries distinguished between "Danes" and "Normans," although Danes in France apparently were often reckoned as "Normans," and Norwegians in England as "Danes." In Ireland the Norsemen were called "Lochlans," whilst the Irish name for the Danes sounds more familiar; it was "Danair." Norwegians and Swedes seem never to have been confounded. From these evidences we may draw the conclusion that Norway, notwithstanding her want of political unity, was all the time regarded as a country of her own.

Some non-political causes must have determined this conception of a special nationality.

In the first instance, the geographical delimitation of the country was probably regarded as real and natural. To the north, the west, and the south, the high sea itself had drawn the border-lines. Towards the north-east, vast uninhabited regions separated the Norwegians from those Russians who inhabited the territories round the White-Sea,—"Bjarmeland," as that part of the continent was called in medieval Norse. The greater part of the eastern boundary consisted partly in a mountain crest, Kjölen ("the Keel"), partly in large backwoods, which separated Norwegian habitations from those of the Swedes. Only the southern extremity of the long frontier to the east could not be based on any natural geographic line; here the intercourse with the Swedes was lively, and the unstable border-line seems to have been determined by weapons, as both a Norwegian and a Swedish petty realm were established in these regions during the early centuries after Christ, and apparently fought wars against each other.

Differences in language, on the other hand, cannot have

played any determining part in the creation of three different nationalities in the North. If we can base our judgment on the inscriptions in runes, there was not more than one Nordic tongue before the VIIth century A.D. Soon afterwards, "Old Norse" emerged as a language of its own. But contemporary thinking does not seem to have recognised this fact. It is significant that Snorre, who was, himself, an unsurpassed master of the Old Norse, in the very first sentence of his saga-book tells us that he will write down the old accounts of those rulers in the Northlands (Norway) who spoke "Danish tongue,"—a remark which must sound strange to that modern faction in Norway, which holds the greatest possible deviation from "Danish tongue" to be the true characteristic of Norwegian nationalism.

The fact that the old Norwegians, centuries before the establishment of the Norwegian State, were in possession of that strong fellow-feeling and mutual acknowledgment of homogeneity which constitute the essence of nationality, should, on the whole, be more attributed to common social conditions than to any pride of having developed a separate culture.

One feature of structural importance formed the real basis for the similarity of social evolution in all parts of Norway: the scattered settlement of the population. Villages were practically unknown. Each settler appropriated his own farm, and built his houses on his own ground. Younger sons loved to migrate into the fields and woods in order to break virgin soil. If big farms sometimes had to be divided, new independent units were brought into existence, each one with a new yard and new buildings. The farmers were completely independent owners of their estates. Nay, they were more: there is truth in the old Norwegian slogan that each peasant was the king of his farm.

Norwegians have never doubted that the country was thus originally settled by the establishment of scattered farms, a method of agricultural colonization which is typical in Norway even to-day. A great foreign scholar of this century made, however, an effort to dispute the national theory. Sir Paul Vinogradoff pointed to the fact that in some

districts, particularly in western Norway, several farms were situated round a common yard, all of them having their houses arranged in a cluster, and concluded that they must be remnants of original villages. Recent Norwegian research work has completely disproved his contention. Those clusters of farm-houses have not existed for many centuries, and all of them originated in partitions of greater estates between several heirs. They were results of land becoming scarce, and have no relation to the national principle of primary settlement.

Economically, the widespread Norwegian farms had to be more or less independent of trade, as the country possessed but few markets, whilst travelling was troublesome and took a long time. Thus, only few and costly articles were purchased or acquired by barter. Consequently, the economic activities of the peasants were varied. The farmer had not only to till his soil and look after his domestic animals; he also felled trees, built houses and boats, produced iron, manufactured weapons and furniture, fished and hunted, prepared hides and furs, made shoes and procured fuel from the woods. He was agriculturist and shepherd, butcher and potter, wood-cutter and carpenter, boat-builder and oarsman, joiner and wood-carver, iron-blaster and smith, fisherman and hunter, tanner and shoemaker—all in one and one in all. His women-folk had not only to do domestic work and assist in the outhouses; they were also spinners, weaveresses and seamstresses. The farm was a country of its own, with a rather autocratic economic system.

But a country needs also religion—or at least ideology—, law and defence. How were these matters arranged in the old Norway?

The whole people belonged to one religion, believing in the same circle of gods (the "aesir") under the leadership of Odin, and we have every reason to assume that common religious conceptions played an important part in binding the old Norsemen together. But no hierarchy of priests had monopolised the divine worship for themselves, using it as an instrument for exercising spiritual tyranny, such as the case was in so many other ancient communities. Not only

had the mythology itself strange democratic features; also the conventional forms of worship were democratised. Each peasant acted as the priest of his own farm. Larger estates were equipped with a little domestic chapel, called a "horg," whilst the poor man outside his house placed a "sacrificial stone," dedicated to one of the gods; here animals were sacrificed,—"blooded," as the old Norsemen called it. In more densely-populated areas there existed, also real temples, called "hovs"; but here the most distinguished peasant of the district led the rites, and the temples seem to have been used only for more solemn ceremonies. Even a far-reaching individualism characterised the worship in old Norway, as every man could choose one of the gods as his particular protector. Such a choice was thought to establish a mystical tie between the worshipper and his personal deity. He carried with him an image of this god, prayed with the idol in his hand and believed that, through this iconolatry, he could obtain special favours, and direct help in dangerous situations.

On the whole, the religious rites did not foster any organisation of its own. "The temple" was no established power in heathen Norway like "the church" in Catholic times. The want for law, on the other hand, brought the old Norsemen together in a sort of organised communities. At fixed dates all free men in a district, a so-called "herad," appeared at a traditional meeting-place, a so-called "Thing," to consider complaints, settle disputes and lay down rules for social behaviour as well as for necessary collaboration. There presided here a chieftain who was called a "herse," at least in western Norway. But almost all over the country there existed also unions of herads, called "fylker;" the corresponding English expression seems to be "shires." In the IXth century twenty-eight such greater units were known. But this organisation seems to have been rather loose, and it did not centre round Things. A number of shires, on the other hand, had a common supreme Thing, a "Law-Thing." There did not exist any sort of representative system, and every free man within the area of the "law" had the same right to meet at the supreme Thing as at the Heradsthing, and apparently actually did so, if he or his family or some of

his friends were directly interested in any of the proceedings. But the difficulties of travelling must have seriously restricted the attendance, and we have to assume that the Law-Things were dominated by the richer peasants, the hersers and the leaders of the shires, who sometimes called themselves "earls," sometimes even "kings."

A system like this bears the stamp of a long development. It must obviously have come into existence after fights and compromises. But neither origin nor evolution is known to us. Some theories of scholars from the XIXth century tried to solve the mystery. All of them were, however, more built on speculations than on recorded facts. It seems, therefore, most honest blankly to admit our ignorance.

If we shall try to make guesses, it seems probable that the Things originated in the want for common treatment of crimes and offences, but, as we know them, their jurisdiction also embraced suits not involving criminal actions, and the customary laws instituted by the Things contained rules for property as well as for contracts. Thus, the old Norsemen developed a whole system of civil law centuries before the foundation of the Norwegian State. To such theorists as advocate the hypothesis that the rights of property are creations of the State, these historic facts must be somewhat embarrassing.

Also, in another respect the practice of the Things is illuminating to the theory of law. Their decisions were not backed by any official force. Whoever brought his case before the Thing obtained decision only. The execution of the sentence was left to himself—and his friends. We may, thus, characterise the Things by the saying of Lao-Tse: "Decision and nothing more,—decision without force."

How were these decisions taken? As far as we know, no vote was cast. Resolutions were carried by acclamation only. But the act of acclamation was certainly most impressive: the crowd beat their shields with their swords or battle-axes. To a culprit, the bang must have sounded like a serious warning, telling him that armed men were willing to punish him by private initiative.

Whilst the Things, thus, never organised a police force, they enacted, already, in their early days, local laws for

common defence, prescribing that the shires should be divided in "furnisher districts," called "shipreder," because each district had to build, equip and man a ship. The subdivisions of the shipreder were given different names and different size by the various leading Law-Things, but the system was, in principle, the same all over the country. In old skaldic lays, and, later, in the laws themselves, we find the technical term the "leidang" used to signify the totality of fighting forces raised and equipped by the shipreder. How chiefs and commanders were chosen we do not know.

This social and legal system of the old Norsemen may, in modern terminology, be described as an extreme liberalistic democracy. Each farm was an economic unit of its own, and had its own policy of production and trade. All collaboration was, in its form, voluntary. There existed no central power and no police force. Laws were enacted, and defence established, by common resolutions of free men, meeting in plenary assemblies.

A people living under such conditions had to develop an independent and self-willed character.

V

THE NORWEGIAN VIKINGS

The collaboration between free men in the old Norse society did not only result in the establishment of internal order, but also in the organising of a number of attacks upon other countries; we are accustomed to call them the "Viking raids." As a collective name for the aggressors, the "Vikings" is an appellation of modern origin. But the word itself is derived from Old Norse. "Vikingr mikill"—great seafaring warrior—was the most beloved epithet of an ambitious Norwegian in the IXth and Xth centuries.

Not all Vikings came from Norway. Danes and Swedes took just as much part in the raids. Indeed, on most occasions, more than one of the Nordic nations were represented on the battle-field. There existed, however, a marked difference between two main directions of the raids. The Swedes, supported only by small Norwegian and Danish contingents, crossed the Baltic, conquered great parts of the Russian steppes, and even became lords of the Dnieper basin; their achievements were certainly the greatest, if measured by square miles. The Danes and Norwegians, on the other hand, crossed the North Sea and attacked England, Scotland, Ireland, the Frisian coast, France and Spain. We see, thus, that geography determined the Viking trends of the three Nordic peoples: the Swedes, being in principle a Baltic nation, took the eastern course, the Danes and the Norwegians, belonging to the Atlantic and the North Sea, turned to the south and the west.

We do not know, with any exactitude, when the first raids took place. Fridtjof Nansen stresses that "we may conclude from historical sources that as early as the VIth century the Viking voyages certainly took place over the North Sea, from Denmark to the land of the Franks, and doubtless also to southern Britain, and perhaps by the beginning of the VIIth century the Norwegians had established themselves in

Shetland and even plundered the Hebrides and the north-west of Ireland (in 612)." But these events do not seem to have aroused any serious attention, as the chronicles of the western countries generally refer the very first raid to the years between 786 and 793, during the reign of King Beorhtric of Wessex, when three Norwegian boats put in to the Dorset coast, and the crews murdered the King's reeve. But from then on the raids were repeated with only short intervals. In 793 Lindisfarne monastery, on Holy Island, off the Northumbrian coast, was attacked, plundered and destroyed. The year after, the monastery of Jarrow was robbed, and that of Monkwearmouth threatened. In 795 Vikings plundered the island Rechru, near Ireland; marauding Northmen landed also in Wales and Scotland. St. Patrick's Isle, on the west coast of Man, was looted in 798. The first Viking landing in France took place in 799, and in the following year Charles the Great had to strengthen the defence of the Frisian coast against the Danes.

All sources from the invaded countries agree in one statement: these attacks came suddenly and unexpectedly. Everywhere the population was unprepared. The first successes of the Vikings were, therefore, easily won. We have to assume that the pioneers, when returning, spread tales in vivid colours, not only of rich booty but also of weak resistance. Thus, every successful raid became an inducement to new aggressions, and, as the years passed, a growing number of warriors from the north came sailing southwards or westwards in the spring, with the intention to loot and plunder the richer countries of which they had been told. Before the middle of the IXth century every fashionable young man in Norway and Denmark had to prove himself a brave Viking; the mode simply demanded it. Thus, the original Viking raids correspond to the sport of our own times. They were the enterprises of adventurous young men desiring excitement and laurels. But successively they assumed a more serious and important character. Homecoming victors organised greater forces for new, ambitious undertakings. They amassed big fleets under their command and sailed abroad, not in order to loot and plunder, but to fight and conquer.

Their landings were no longer casual and evanescent happenings, but commencements of well-planned campaigns. Naturally, resistance stiffened as the Viking forces attacked, not only monasteries and peaceful islands, but even well-defended continental towns and big provinces. The military ability of the Viking chieftains, however, increased with experience, and they learnt to lead their warriors even in big battles. Kings and generals of the Christian world found their matches in the uncouth and untitled commanders of raiders from the unknown north.

The first concern of the Viking leaders, when planning their conquests, was to acquire permanent beach-heads in the countries they wished to invade. Thus, in the 830's and 840's Danish chieftains succeeded in establishing strongholds on the Frisian coast, whilst Norwegian Vikings settled in the Irish harbours of Dublin, Anagassan, Waterford, Wexford and Limerick. Norwegians, attacking from a fleet of 67 ships, after having plundered the strong and guarded city of Nantes in 843, landed at a small isle, Noirmoutier, in the Loire estuary and fortified it as a base for subsequent aggression. These Vikings are, in the Frankish annals, expressly stated as being "Westfaldingi," men from the petty realm of Vestfold, in that southern part of Norway which was called the "Vik" —one of the many possible etymologies of the word "Viking" is, by the way, that it, to begin with, simply meant a "man from the Vik." Places in Brittany and the Seine estuary were made bases in the 850's; from strongholds here Danish and Norwegian Vikings, between 859 and 862, made a sustained raid on Spain, the Rhône estuary and, according to some sources, even on Italy. In 867 Danish Vikings captured York, and for years used this town as a base for operations in eastern England.

Ireland—"the land of Eire" as it was called by the old Norwegians—was to be that western country which first had to yield a considerable part of its territory to the Vikings. Here, also, warriors from Vestfold seem to have played a pioneer part. Their commander was the brilliant leader Turgeis (Thorgest or Thorgils in Old Norse), who was probably of the Royal Vestfold family, the Ynglings. In 834

he made himself king of Ulster. Later on he extended his power, terrorising both Connaught in the west and Meath in the east. After his death, in 845, the Norwegians of Ulster had to defend themselves not only against Irish tribes but also against Danish Vikings. The Danes were victorious in 851 and 852, but in 853 the Norwegians regained the upper hand. According to Icelandic sources, this came about through the arrival of another Royal Vestfold chieftain, Olav, commonly called "Olav the White;" two modern authors, Mr. A. O. Anderson and Mr. D. W. Hunter Marshall, have, however, doubted the authenticity of this record. But it is certain that one Norse King Olav made Dublin his capital, and consolidated Norwegian power in central Ireland. He could, however, not prevent the Irish high-king, Aed Finnlaith, from expelling the Norse Vikings from the greater part of Ulster. On the other hand, he made three successful campaigns in Scotland between 865 and 871. But in 871 he left Ireland. According to a Scottish chronicle he was killed in Scotland, whilst according to other sources he hurried home to Norway in order to take part in some conflict there, and fell in his homeland, probably the next year. After the departure of Olav Norse power in Ireland declined for a while, but in 914 Norwegian and Danish Vikings, now acting in union, undertook a new invasion, and in 919 the Irish high-king was beaten at Islandsbridge, in the valley of Liffey, the high-king himself and twelve other Irish kings falling in the battle. The Viking realm in Ireland was now firmly established, and not until 1014 did the Irishmen get a real revenge for their defeat at Islandsbridge. Then they won the battle of Clontarf, which occupies a high place in Irish history. But they were not able to make the most of this victory, and at the end of the century the Norse realm in Ireland was still in existence.

In England the more extensive Viking conquests were made by the Danes, but Norwegians fought side by side with them during all the early invasion campaigns. In the Xth century this comradeship in arms was broken, and more than one Norwegian chieftain supported the Englishmen. The background for this changed attitude was probably the fact that the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, which had been

established in the meantime, often were hostile to each other, and that the very existence of these two separate States brought the national differences between Danish and Norwegian Vikings to the fore. Dynastic controversies between the Norse kingdom of Dublin and the Danish kingdom of York contributed to the alienation of the former allies, although—or because—both the later Dublin kings and the York kings belonged to the same Royal family, which descended from a great Danish Viking, Ragnar Lodbrok.

The Western Vikings made undoubtedly their most important conquests in the British Isles. But the greater number of their battle-fields lay in France. In this more remote country Danes and Norwegians seem to have collaborated more closely than elsewhere, and French annals have not recorded serious controversies between the two invading peoples. On the other hand, the different Viking chieftains, most of them Danes by birth, did not act in concert, but fought separately, and even intrigued against each other: one of the many reasons for the transitory character of their early achievements on French soil. Among those exploits were the captures of Bordeaux in 848 and Paris in 857. In the 880's the Vikings even made a victorious advance as far inland as to the Argonne, between the Aisne and Verdun; for many years they dominated both the Seine and the Loire. But the Franks were always able to regain lost territory, and finally to expel the remnants of the initially irresistible invaders. In 892 the last of the Danish leaders found it wise to retire to the Viking possessions in England, and the land of the Franks was free from the Viking terror for the first time in forty years.

Nevertheless, it was through an attack upon France that the Vikings, at last, achieved a success which was destined to change the whole history of the world. The victor was Rollo, who, in 911, landed west of the Seine estuary and, after a short but lucky campaign, obtained, through the treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte, the possession of all the territory from the Bresle and the Epte to the sea, together with the Rouen, Lisieux and Evreu districts of the Seine basin. This fertile province he received from the King of the West Franks,

Charles the Simple, as a fief, on the customary terms of vassalage in the Frankish kingdoms, but being a strong and independent character he soon acquired all real power in his realm, and his successors, "the Dukes of Normandy," made the court of Rouen a focus of cultural life in France.

Who was this mystical Rollo who suddenly made his appearance on the grand scene of history? Was he an unknown man of humble origin? Snorre Sturlason denies it. In the twenty-fourth chapter of "Harald Fairhair's Saga" he says that Rollo was the son of Ragnvald, the Earl of Möre, one of the most brilliant chieftains in Norway. According to Snorre, his Norse name was Rolv, and, being so heavy that no Nordic horse could carry him, he was called Rolv the Walker ("Gange-Rolv"). He had in his youth won renown as a great Viking, but on one occasion he violated the laws of his country by plundering on the shores of the home-land, and the Thing declared him an outlaw. Thus forced to leave Norway, he sailed to the Hebrides, which served him as a base for his attack on northern France. The French author Henri Prentout, who in 1911 made the problem of Rollo the subject of a penetrating analysis, concludes his remarks on the tale of Snorre by saying: "One cannot fail to observe that the Norwegian tradition is perfectly admissible; from this we cannot affirm that it is true, but it is probable, and it is, in its simplicity, consistent with the historical data."

The Norwegian nationality of Rollo is, however, not undisputed, as the Norman author Dudo of St. Quentin in a work written between 1015 and 1030, in an introductory remark about this great Viking leader, maintains that he came from Denmark. But Dudo is, in general, held to be a most unreliable source, and his narrative of Rollo contains a series of conspicuous errors. Henri Prentout writes, after having revealed these mistakes: "To resume: what Dudo offers us, are inaccurate genealogy and vague, erroneous geography; one of his initial statements cannot be verified, whilst the whole rest of his recital obviously consists of a systematic deformation of historic facts; why, then, when everything else in Dudo's tale is false, should this sole initial statement be true?" Besides, Mr. Kendrick draws attention to a strong

negative proof for the incorrectness of Dudo's assertion, the fact, namely, that the Danish historian "Saxo, the persistent panegyrist of the Danes, and a writer to whom Dudo's book was known, makes no boast that Rollo was of Danish ancestry." On the other hand, according to Snorre, a hundred years after the invasion of Normandy a Duke of Rouen, who was a descendant of Rollo, declared that he well remembered his kinship with the chiefs of Norway, and Henri Prentout has found echoes of the Norwegian tradition in English and Italian literature of the XIIth century. No wonder that the authorities of Normandy, in 1911, made the millenary in Rouen a manifestation of French-Norwegian friendship.

Rollo, Mr. Kendrick writes, is "perhaps, indeed, the only man among all the pirate-princes of the west whose memory has been consistently treasured until this day with honour and affection in the land that he made his home." The other Vikings were generally described with horror and hatred. Accepting the narratives of the annals at their face value, the Norwegian archaeologist and historian Haakon Shetelig wrote in 1930: "It is strange that modern vanity rejoices in vindicating for one's own nation the greatest possible share in the Viking raids, as the contemporary sources of Western Europe are unanimous in a judgment which is the opposite of flattering: the Vikings, as they were known by other nations, were not only buccaneers, they were, in addition, treacherous and wily; it gave them delight to be cruel; they were careless fortune-hunters, regardless of life and death. They slaughtered old folks, women and small children, they burnt nuns alive, they did not know mercy towards the defenceless." Mr. Kendrick admits the authenticity of Viking cruelties. He adds, however: "But even in the west the reign of terror that was the result of the ravages of the Norsemen and the Danes (most of all the Danes) was not of long duration, and therefore the horrified lamentations of the monks and all the noisy outcry of alarm and hatred that sounds shrilly through the pages of the IXth century chronicles must be read as a verdict only upon a short and temporary phase in Viking history. For sustained pillage and arson ceased with the accomplishment of land-winning, and in the Xth century,

after a hundred years of contact with Christendom, the fury of the attack upon towns and churches was spent, and the Vikings took up arms only either to increase or to defend their holding." We have also to bear in mind what is stressed in the article on the Vikings in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, that "most of our evidence as to the Vikings of this (early) period is derived from the literature of the lands which they visited, and is, therefore, essentially hostile. . . . Their own side of the story is untold, for the men who created the great literature of western Scandinavia had no certain memory of events or personalities in the true Viking age."

Three more features should be added to the picture if we wish to form a justified opinion on the character and behaviour of the Vikings in general, and the Norwegian Vikings in particular.

First, we have to remember that the Viking raids took place in an age when the lights of ancient civilisation had been extinguished, whilst the new humane teaching of Christianity had not yet reached the hearts of the masses. It was not only the Vikings who were ruthless and atrocious, but also their adversaries. The untold sagas of the Viking chiefs would no doubt have informed us sufficiently of cruelties committed by Celts and Anglo-Saxons, Frisians and Franks. But as regards cruelties, one great difference between the Vikings and their adversaries has to be recorded: all Christians, even the most barbarian among them, cherished respect, nay, awe, for priests, monks and nuns, whilst those servants of the Church were regarded by the Vikings as ordinary, perhaps somewhat queer and useless people. The Vikings, accordingly, plundered monasteries and church vaults with the same greedy lust as palaces and warehouses. Now, the greater part of western annalists and chroniclers were bishops, deans or monks. They had, therefore, every reason to dwell upon the atrocities of the Vikings, whilst diplomatic tact naturally dictated caution in their descriptions of the warfare against heathens. It is significant that it was the plunderings of monasteries that first aroused the attention of the annalists.

Secondly, under the rough and uncouth surface of the Viking warriors there slumbered powers and qualities of high

intellectual and cultural worth. When they had settled in their new countries and were placed before peaceful tasks, this second nature of theirs was revealed, and in a surprisingly short time they became contributors to literature, art and organised civilisation. Particularly the Normans soon excelled in useful and progressive work. One may be allowed to recall Macaulay's eulogy. Says the great Whig writer in the first chapter of his *History of England*: "The Normans were then (in the XIth century) the foremost race of Christendom. . . . Without laying aside that dauntless valour which had been the terror of every land from the Elbe to the Pyrenees, the Normans rapidly acquired all, and more than all, the knowledge and refinement which they found in the country where they settled. Their courage secured their territory against foreign invasion. They established internal order, such as had long been unknown in the Frank empire. They embraced Christianity; and with Christianity they learned a great part of what the clergy had to teach. They abandoned their native speech, and adopted the French tongue in which the Latin was the predominant element. They speedily raised their new language to a dignity and importance which it had never before possessed. They found it a barbarous jargon; they fixed it in writing; and they employed it in legislation, in poetry, and in romance. . . . The polite luxury of the Norman presented a striking contrast to the coarse voracity and drunkenness of his Saxon or Danish neighbours. He loved to display his magnificence, not in huge piles of food and hogsheads of strong drink, but in large and stately edifices, rich armour, gallant horses, choice falcons, well-ordered tournaments, banquets delicate rather than abundant, and wines remarkable rather for their exquisite flavour than for their intoxicating power. That chivalrous spirit, which has exercised so powerful an influence on the politics, morals, and manners of all the European nations, was found in the highest exaltation among the Norman nobles."

Thirdly, the Norwegian Vikings were just as much settlers and colonisers as filibusters and conquerors. On this important point there existed a marked difference between the Norsemen and their Danish comrades. Whilst the Danes, as stressed

by Mr. Kendrick, in reality only appeared as real colonisers for some decades of the IXth century on the Frisian coast, Norwegian Viking colonisation constitutes a long and important chapter in the history of the Atlantic Isles. Indeed, the greater part of the Norsemen that landed on the island shores, came not as hostile warriors but as peaceful immigrants. The Faroes, the Orkneys, the Shetlands, the Hebrides, Iceland and Greenland were Norse settlements.

But how was this possible? Do not big stone towers from earlier periods tell us that the Scottish islands were inhabited centuries, maybe millenniums before the Viking age? Is it not improbable that the Celts should have eschewed meadows and arables situated so near to their great country of Ireland? Do not ancient names, still alive in many of the Scottish islands, prove that the Celts really had settled there?

A. W. Brögger seems to be the first modern historian who realised the scope of the problem. He has, also, put forward a most ingenious theory to explain why nothing is known of fights between Norwegian Vikings and Celtic aborigines on the Scottish islands. In a lecture at Oxford, delivered in 1928, he gave the facts on which he built his reasoning: "It is well known that in the peat bogs of Scotland, the Shetlands and the Orkneys great trunks and roots of trees are often found, proving that large forests once existed in these places. Further, that not only in the peat bogs, but in older strata, there have been discovered the bones of large forest animals, deer, stags, wolves, bears and many others." One conclusion is unavoidable: the island climate had, in earlier days, another character. It changed at the beginning of the Norwegian iron age. That same deterioration of climate which brought back to Norway the snowy winters and broke down the prosperity of our bronze age, destroyed the forests and animal world of the islands north and west of Scotland. They succumbed to the new, recurrent cyclones that swept in from the Atlantic. But without wood a primitive civilisation based upon ship-building cannot subsist. Just as the climate change forced the Norwegians of the early iron age to abandon their highlands and most northern provinces, so it forced the Celts to abandon nearly all the Scottish islands. Maybe some few impoverished

families were left, but they were, in any case, too few and too weak to fight against the Norse immigrants. But how were the newcomers able to stand up against the hard, cyclonic climate? In the first place, they were more accustomed to harsh weather than the Celts. Secondly, parallels with certain experiences from Norway seem to indicate that climatic conditions may have been improving again, just at the time of the Norwegian immigration. Thirdly, to the Norse settlers the need of timber and wooden materials in the islands was not as fatal as it had been to the Celts, because they kept up their trade by the help of ships built in their homeland; they were thus dependent on their connections with Norway.

Two great waves of Norwegian immigrants settled in the Scottish isles between 780 and 850, the former more democratic, the latter led by proud aristocrats. Together they established complete Norwegian societies, using their own law and their own language. Their influence is noticeable even to-day. It is characteristic that a Faroe Islander, Jakob Jakobsen, as late as in the 1890's, was able to compile some 10,000 words of Norse origin in the Shetlands,—"norn" words, as they are called here; his *Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland* was published in English, in two stately volumes, between 1928 and 1932.

But not only in the isles surrounding Great Britain and Ireland appeared the Norsemen as true colonisers. They founded new settlements also in central and northern Ireland, as well as in Caithness. Even in England traces of Norwegian colonisation have been discovered. Mr. William Gershom Collingwood writes in his *Lake District History*, which was published in 1925: "The Norse settlement in this region is an old thesis. It has been gradually hammered out of guesses more than a hundred years old, but the evidence now available makes it certain as a proposition in Euclid. In a word, all the early Lake District place-names are Old Norse, except river-names and one or two, like Blencathra and Penruddock, which prove the survival of Britons." It will be seen that the modern results described by Mr. Collingwood have been achieved by a minute philological examination of

place-names. This method was developed in the XIXth-century Norway as a means of determining the age of still-existing farms; Professor Oluf Rygh was an unsurpassed master in its application. Professor Brögger used it in the 1920's as an auxiliary instrument for discovering the relations between the Celtic aborigines and the Norwegian immigrants in the Scottish isles, and it may well be that the method can still reveal hidden information for the illumination of Viking history. In the Lake District its results are supported by the social fact that the local farmers in the Middle Ages were free men upon free holdings, living under the Norwegian system of land ownership.

The Faroes were uninhabited when the Irish monk Dicuil, about the year 825, wrote his well-known geographic treatise. But he said that Irish hermits had been wont to dwell in those islands for a space of about a hundred years; they left their isolated refuge, however, because Norse robbers made it impossible for them to stay. The Norwegians came back later, but then as colonisers. Grim Kamban was the first new settler; he lived in the latter half of the IXth century. As far as we can judge from the sources, he must have been a most remarkable personality, and after his death the other settlers are said to have worshipped him, believing that his spirit could bring them good seasons.

When the Norwegians, at about the same time, made "land-take" (landnàm) on Iceland, they actually found anchorites there. The Icelandic historian Are Frode (1067–1148) relates that the Norwegians called these hermits "papar" (priests); he adds, however, that "they afterwards went away, because they would not be here together with heathens, and they left behind them Irish books, bells and croziers, from which it could be concluded that they were Irishmen." It was, thus, not the Norsemen who discovered Iceland. Even a Swede, Gardar Svavarsson, is said to have explored the island before the Norwegian immigration took place. But the settlement was purely a Norwegian affair. It began in 874 and occupied a period of some sixty years. Are speaks of it in his *Book of Settlements* (Landnàmabók) with such detailed minuteness that it is certainly the best-known settling in

universal history. From him we know the name, pedigree and history of each settler in geographical order, the names of their homesteads, their courts and temples. He mentions 4,000 persons, one-third of them women, and 2,000 places. One of the foremost settlers was Queen Aud, "the Deep-minded," widow of Olav the White. But the Icelanders did not recognise any royalty. They organised a sort of a legal State as a free men's community with a Thing (the "Althing") as the central power.

It was one of the two first Norwegian visitors to Iceland, Floke Vilgerdsson, who gave the country its wintry, glacial name; he had experienced many unpleasant events during a lengthy sojourn on the lonely island. "Greenland" sounds warmer and more inviting. But the born adventurer, Eric the Red, who discovered that big, north-western continent in 981 or 982, gave it purposely such an attractive name because he wished to persuade friends and comrades to accompany him to his newly-found country. He was, himself, a Norwegian by birth, but because he was implicated in a murder-suit he had fled to Iceland, and it was from Iceland that he sailed with twenty-five ships in 985 or 986, in order to colonise "Greenland." Only fourteen vessels reached their destination. But those settlers who landed in the new country chose to stay there. They founded two colonies, one western, around the modern Godthaab, one more eastern, near the present Julianehaab.

Still more inviting than "Greenland" was the name of another new country, mentioned in the Icelandic sagas: "Wineland the Good." So dreamy and fairy-like is this name that it reminded Fridtjof Nansen of the "Isles of the Blest;" and he tried to prove that many of the details in the sagas about voyages to "Wineland" must have been borrowed from those Greek authors who described a sunken archipelago in the western ocean. Mr. G. M. Gathorne-Hardy has, however, in a brilliant and convincing treatise from 1921, *The Norse Discoverers of America*, delivered a scrutinising and penetrating criticism of Nansen's arguments, showing that practically every one of those statements in which Nansen found old Greek reminiscences corresponds to topographical

and historical realities known from the eastern coast of North America. But Nansen admitted that the old Norsemen were the first discoverers of America, and in modern learned literature this fact is generally accepted. The still-existing controversies refer only to the identification of some localities described by the sagas, with various bays and places along the American shores.

The first of the discoverers was Bjarne Herjolfsson. He was in Norway when his father, in 986, accompanied Eric the Red to Greenland. Returning to Iceland, he refused to unload his cargo, and set out to find his parents. But his ship was lost in the fog, and drifted away towards the south-west. When he had landfall he was in sight of an unknown continent. The existing descriptions of the discovered country are not very precise. Two interpretations seem possible. Mr. Gathorne-Hardy finds it probable that he "first sighted land somewhere on the Barnstable peninsula, in the neighbourhood of Cape Cod." Professor William Hovgaard, on the other hand, is of the opinion that Bjarne found himself sailing along the shores of Newfoundland.

Whilst the discovery of Bjarne Herjolfsson was made quite accidentally, at least one of the saga sources, the *Flatey Book*, describes the next voyage to the unknown west as a planned exploration. According to this version of the tale, Leiv Ericsson, a son of the discoverer of Greenland, found it worth while to verify the narrative of Bjarne, bought his vessel, engaged a crew of thirty-five men and set out in search of the new continent. He came first to a barren and ice-capped country which he called Helluland (the land of flat stones), and which presumably was Labrador. Continuing in a southerly direction, he reached a new coast. Says the *Flatey Book*: "This land was low-lying and wooded, and wherever they went there were wide stretches of white sand, and the slope from the sea was not abrupt. Then Leiv said: This land shall be given a name from its resources, and shall be called Markland (wooden land)." The description applies well to the south-western end of Nova Scotia, in the neighbourhood of Cap Sable. Leiv's third discovery was a land still more to the south; here a German sailor of the crew found wild

grapes; Leiv, therefore, called it Wineland. Grain was also seen here.

This tale aroused the doubt of learned men in the XIXth century. They thought it improbable that the Norse sailors could have been so far to the south that they had seen vines. But the discovery of grapes and self-sowing cereal has, independently of the Icelandic sagas, been stated by a well-known historian of the XIth century, Adam of Bremen, who wrote in a work from about 1070: "He (the King of Denmark) told me of yet another island besides, discovered by many in that ocean, which is called Wineland, from the fact that there vines grow naturally, producing the best wine. Moreover, that grain abounds there, without sowing, we have ascertained, not from fabulous conjecture, but from reliable report of the Danes." The words "not from fabulous conjecture" seem inserted in a sort of half-conscious anticipation of such doubtful criticism as was launched centuries later. But why should not Leiv Ericsson have been able to sail south, after first having crossed the sea between Greenland and America? The learned critics have not told us. How far to the south did he go? The saga contains definite information concerning this important point: in the *Flatey Book* is given an astronomical observation, taken at winter solstice. The expressions used in this statement were, however, not easy to understand. But in a paper read before the Viking Society of London, on December 5th, 1922, the late Mr. M. M. Mjelde solved the problem. His solution gives a northern latitude of 36° 54′ as the most northerly point where the observation could have been made. Here it is most probable that Leiv Ericsson's men found grapes, as the northern limit of the vine in America is Passamaquoddy Bay, in latitude 45°. Mr. Kendrick places Leiv's camp in Virginia or Maryland, on the shores of Chesapeake Bay.

During later voyages to Wineland, the most famous of them made by an Icelandic merchant, Thorfinn Karlsevni, in the early 1020's, the Norsemen were attacked by natives, and although they repelled the savages, the great number of wild enemies seems to have frightened them; in any case, after the 1020's they did not make any serious new effort to

reach the remote lands in the west. The tales of their encounters with the Red Indians deliver, however, more proofs of the historicity of the saga records. As particularly stressed by Mr. Gathorne-Hardy, the Norsemen had, at that time, not yet discovered the Eskimos. The Red Indians were, therefore, the first primitive natives ever observed by Norwegians. But the saga descriptions of their behaviour are in complete concert with corresponding accounts in the exploration literature of the XIXth century. Moreover, the sagas mention that the savages used a strange war engine, a variety of ballista worked by several men, and whilst modern Red Indians use no such weapon, Algonquin tradition has preserved the memory of a formidable ballista which answers, even in several details, to the description given in the sagas.

When the "man in the street," in earlier days, only reluctantly accepted the Norse discovery of America as truth, it was because he doubted that the small Norwegian boats of those days could sail the Atlantic. But after the find of the Gokstad-ship, a Norwegian skipper, Magnus Andersen, had it copied in every detail, and in 1893 he sailed this new "viking vessel," with a crew of twelve men, from Norway to the world exhibition in Chicago.

The Viking raids present the historians with two great problems: why did these recurrent waves of ruthless warriors suddenly roll out from the north, and how could such disunited and only loosely-organised hordes seriously threaten the leading countries of the age?

Several contesting theories have been launched. Each of them stresses one point, and as the various views do not exclude one another, it may well be that all of them contain contributions to a many-sided truth.

In recent years, A. W. Brögger has drawn attention to the conspicuous parallelism between the exodus from Norway in the Viking age and the great emigration from the country to the United States between the 1840's and 1914. He has raised the question: Is it not possible that parallel causes were in operation? The idea seems plausible and fruitful. Professor Brögger, himself, gives, however, some misrepre-

sentation of the economic conditions in Norway that caused or favoured the XIXth-century emigration, and his own conclusions can, therefore, only be accepted with some reservations. But Norway at the beginning of the Viking age and Norway in the 1840's had apparently one common difficulty to overcome: a growing peasant population brought to the fore that always pending problem of an old agricultural country which we may call the "question of the younger sons." The owners of the farms, the "odalsmen" or "haulders," wished to maintain their estates intact or, at least, not to divide them in so small parts that their families would have to sink down into poverty. In earlier days, an abundance of virgin soil and the superfluity of game had made it easy for the younger sons to find their livelihood even in the absence of industry and trade as special labour-absorbing activities. Now, all good or profitably situated virgin soil had been appropriated, and the wild animals had begun to retire into remote and less accessible backwoods. Then unexpected news came in. At the end of the VIIIth century, returning seafarers told of easy plundering, rich booty and thrilling adventures in other countries; in a like way the tales in the 1840's of the endless fertile prairies in America aroused the imagination and initiative of the young farmer-sons. In both cases they acted: quickly, and in great numbers. But in the peaceful XIXth century they hired a ship or simply bought tickets at the nearest shipping agency; in the VIIIth and IXth centuries they had to choose a leader and organise themselves for possible warfare. The great assemblies at the Things may have been the places where plans for raids and conquests were discussed and agreed upon; here the best brains and the bravest warriors met; here news was exchanged and speeches made; here the greatest selection of possible leaders was available. It is also probable that the existing organisations of legal democracy and common defence were sometimes used as a basis for building up the Viking units. Thus, both economic conditions and social structure gave inducements to start warlike enterprises aiming at winning booty, laurels and even land abroad.

The explanation here given presupposes two facts that

cannot be irrefutably verified: in the first instance we have to assume that the pressure of growing population on land had become serious just towards the end of the VIIIth century; secondly, that the national democracy in legal and military matters at the same time had reached a stage which made it suitable as a basis for the organisation of daring external undertakings. It is indicative, however, that a great part of the Norwegian Vikings came from Vestfold and Hordaland, two districts where the population pressure, for various and different historical and geographical reasons, must necessarily have made itself felt at an earlier date than in most other parts of the country.

If we, then, turn to the second problem, we have first to bear in mind that neither Ireland nor England was firmly organised when the Viking raids started, and that the Frankish empire, after the death of Charles the Great, suffered heavily through the many ignoble hostilities between his sons and successors. Mr. Kendrick also underlines "the inevitable Frankish jealousies," which hindered an effective national unity even in times of disaster and distress; the Franks, in the years of Charles the Bald, were blinded by the same partisan spirit which in the 1930's undermined the resistance of modern France against German infiltration and aggression; "it is wretched to have to write these things," remarked one of the contemporary Frankish chroniclers. Thus, the internal weakness of the invaded countries is an admitted fact. But what gave the Vikings their strange strength in aggression and their power to strike with surprise, hard and successfully?

The answer lies near at hand, and is easy to discern in these days of the Second World War: Whilst all defence preparations in the invaded countries had been of a purely military character, the Vikings were superior in naval force, and they introduced a completely new kind of warfare: the amphibious operation.

How was that possible for them? Simply, because they utilised that skill in ship-building which was the greatest technical achievement of the old Northerners in general, and of our Norwegian forefathers in particular. Fridtjof Nansen,

who specially studied this question, and who understood the principles of ship-building better than any previous interpreter of medieval seafaring, gives a vivid picture of the great results obtained by the pioneer sailors of the Nordic countries. This is what he writes: "It was the Scandinavians, and especially the Norwegians, who were the pioneers at sea, who developed an improved style of ship-building and who, with their comparatively good and seaworthy craft, were soon to traverse all the northern waters and open up a prospect into a new world, whereby the geographical ideas of the times should undergo a complete transformation. It has been asserted that the Phoenicians, in their days, ventured out into the open ocean far from land, but this lacks proof, and is improbable. The Norwegians are the first people in history who definitely abandoned the coast-sailing practised before their time, and who took navigation away from the coast and out to the ocean. From them other people have since learnt. First they crossed the North Sea and sailed constantly to Shetland, the Orkneys, North Britain and Ireland; then to the Faroes, Iceland and Greenland, and at last they steered straight across the Atlantic itself, and thereby discovered North America. We do not know how early the passage of the North Sea originated; but probably, as we have seen, it was before the time of Pytheas and much earlier than usually supposed."

Thanks to their ship-building capacity, the Vikings were able to make their raids with big fleets of seaworthy and quick vessels. To give some, arbitrarily chosen, examples: they sailed up the Garonne in 844 with 150 ships, and appeared before Hamburg in 845 with 600 ships; in 885 they used no less than 700 ships for the siege of Paris, attacked Kent in 892 with 250 ships and reached London in 994 with 94 ships.

The warriors who fought from these excellent sailing vessels were well equipped with weapons. Some of the battle-swords, being the work of famous continental smiths, had been imported, but the greater part of their war implements was manufactured at home, thanks to the high development of national iron blast. Here, again, we can refer to the evidence of archaeology. A. W. Brögger has compared "the profuse

collection of iron implements found in the grave of a well-to-do Norwegian peasant of the VIIIth or IXth century (axes, knives, ploughshares, flax-combs and the like) with the poor equipment of iron implements on one of the farms of Charles the Great in the same period," where the finds only consisted of two axes, two spades, two gimlets, a hatchet and a plane. He feels justified in asserting that "the Norwegian peasant civilisation of about the year 800" possessed not only "a more highly-developed standard of boat-building," but also "a richer and more comprehensive production of iron weapons and implements, than any other contemporary civilised race in the West and North."

Superior in naval force and excellently armed, the Vikings adopted tactical methods that were not easy to cope with. They appeared suddenly, in great strength, at a chosen point, landed swiftly, attacked without warning, and withdrew to their ships when they had achieved their object. If they had bolder aims, they undertook longer expeditions inland also, but they always used their ships as movable bases, as sailing fortresses. The Viking bands were the commandos of their time. They appear, in universal history, as the inventors and pioneer masters of combined naval and military operations. An unbroken line leads from the tactics of the Viking chieftains to the commando technique, advocated by Admiral Keyes and Lord Louis Mountbatten, as well as to the invasion strategy used in Sicily and Italy during the summer months of 1943.

VI

THE FOUNDATION OF THE NORWEGIAN STATE

It is worth while underlining that contemporary western annalists mentioned Vestfold as the home-land of valiant Vikings. At least in the IXth century, this little kingdom in the Vik was, accordingly, internationally known; and we have archaeological warrant for its existence even at a much earlier time. Mr. Kendrick believes that we can date the Vestfold realm back to the IVth century.

Vestfold is adjacent to the Oslo Fjord. It possesses excellent, well-protected harbours, and lies within comparatively short sailing distances from Denmark and Sweden. The country is flat, the soil fertile and the climate mild. Vestfold represents an idyll of its own. No wonder that Norwegian culture found one of its first centres in these smiling districts west of the Oslo Fjord. Here was also built the most ancient town in Norway; it was called Skiringssal, and served for centuries as a leading port in the country's international trade; but it decayed before the year 1000, and now not a single remnant of it can be traced.

We do not know at which time a ruler of Vestfold adopted the title of "king," but tradition has it that a foreign dynasty ascended the throne long before the commencement of the Viking age. The newcomers arrived from Sweden, where their ancestors had been kings of the Svitjod realm. They were known as "the Ynglings," and various legends embellished their exploits. Snorre Sturlason devotes the first of his Norwegian king-sagas to a recital of these legends. He tries to trace the origin of the Ynglings back to the old mythological gods who, in his version, were no transcendent fancy-beings, but simply great ancient heroes, to whom popular belief, after their death, attributed the rank of deity. Basing himself, to a great extent, upon an old genealogical poem called "Ynglingatal" ("the tale of the Ynglings"), Snorre gives a line of ascendants of the Vestfold kings, beginning with Njord of Noatun, whom he describes as a con-

temporary and friend of Odin himself. The names of the early Ynglings are mostly strange and fantastic. Down to Halvdan Whiteleg, who was the first of the dynasty to become lord of Vestfold, Snorre mentions the following Swedish rulers of the family: Yngvefrey, Fjolne, Sveigde, Vanlande, Visbur, Domalde, Domar, Dyggve, Dag, Agne, Abrek and Eirik, Yngve and Alv, Iorund, Aun, Egil, Ottar, Adils, Eystein, Yngvar, Anund, Ingjald and Olav. It will be seen that the names, apart from the three initial ones, constitute three alliterative groups, a strong indication of their purely legendary character. Otherwise with the successors of Halvdan Whiteleg: Eystein, Halvdan the Free-handed, Gudröd the Hunter, Olav Geirstada-alv and Ragnvald the Renowned. They are certainly historic personalities, known as kings of Vestfold. According to Snorre, "Ynglingatal" was a lay of homage, composed in honour of Ragnvald the Renowned by his poet laureate, Tjodolf of Kvin.

The realm of the Vestfold kings had only one natural boundary: the sea. It was, also, of varying size. Some of the kings had possessions east of the Oslo Fjord and high up in the valleys. At other times, only the districts in the neighbourhood of Skiringssal were firmly in the hands of the dynasty.

Two Royal tombs of the Vestfold dynasty have been excavated in accordance with scientific principles. Each of them contained a well-preserved ship of the Viking type. They are held to be the most precious relics of old Norway. We have reason to believe that Olav Geirstada-alv was buried in the ship found at Gokstad in 1880, whilst the ship found at Oseberg in 1904 contained the body of Queen Aasa (Åsa), the wife of King Gudröd.

A great many of the archaeological finds in Norway are, like the Viking ships, excavated from tombs. In the early bronze age the custom had been introduced to bring sacrifices to the dead by placing costly implements or adornments in the sepulchres, and although the introduction of cremation some centuries later temporarily weakened the interest taken in burials, the sacrificial custom was never completely abandoned; at the time of the Roman emperors, when cremation

was not in vogue any longer, the gifts to the deceased sometimes assumed almost extravagant forms. From the subsequent centuries two different types of tombs are found, one simpler and sterner, another rich and abundant. A new and strange feature is, however, added to Norwegian burial customs from the VIth century onwards: some tombs contain boats or even ships. Haakon Shetelig remarks that the custom is without pendant in Europe; we have to go to ancient Egypt in order to find the nearest parallel. The ship-tombs remained, however, always scarce, and those of the Vestfold royalties are by far the most splendid we possess. Here the sacrifices were extremely liberal. Thus, in the Oseberg-ship the excavators found, in addition to complete equipment for the vessel, two big tents, a four-wheeled carriage, four sledges, three beds, a number of chests, buckets and pails, a complete set of kitchen utensils, and full equipment for weaving. Further, the skeletons of one old maidservant, probably sacrificed at the funeral, thirteen horses, six dogs and one ox.

What was the meaning of the ship-tombs? Haakon Shetelig suggests that the vessels were intended to serve the deceased on their voyage to the abodes of the dead. But such materialistic interpretation seems wholly improbable. Maybe some superstitious people, in those days, believed that the last sailing actually started underground. The court of Vestfold belonged certainly to a more esoteric conception of the deep mysteries. Since the early bronze age religious cult in Norway had used the language of symbols, and if the entombed Viking ships had something to do with thoughts of the next life, it is much more natural to look upon them as parallel phenomena to the ancient engravings of a ship as such. It seems significant that the Viking ships were buried with their high prows pointing southwards, in the direction of the heavenly sun. A further proof of the symbolism which the old Norsemen attached to tombs lies in the fact that we also possess cenotaphs from the Viking age—imposing barrows devoted to chieftains who died at sea or who were killed abroad. But it is not absolutely certain that the ship-tombs had any hidden religious significance. They may

simply have expressed the last wishes of great sailors or lovers of the sea.

Halvdan the Black, probably meaning the "Black-haired," was a son of the Oseberg Queen. He regained all territories lost by his predecessors and even extended his possessions to the western part of Norway. The saga describes him as "wise, veracious and righteous." But fate did not vouchsafe him a long life. One early spring, when he was but forty years of age, the ice on Lake Mjösa cracked under his sleigh, and he was drowned. His son, Harald, was at that time only a boy, and many chieftains tried to wrest the realm from his hand. But the young King succeeded in frustrating every attempt.

During these early combats a great idea began to take shape in Harald's mind: he would conquer the whole of Norway. According to the legend, repeated in the saga, a young princess, Gyda from Hordaland, first aroused his ambition by refusing to marry a king who only reigned over some shires. Harald opened the great campaign by leading his army along Lake Mjösa, and to the north, through the Gudbrand's Valley—the same highway which, more than a thousand years later, was chosen by the main body of the German invasion troops. In the Trondheim districts King Harald seems to have attained supreme power more through diplomatic skill than through the use of weapons. But when he had got together a fleet and sailed southwards, he met stiff resistance. A big victory at Solskjel, however, brought him the mastery of the north-western shires. For a while he seems to have felt satisfied with these territorial accessions, and although he sailed through the whole of the fairway to his own Vestfold, he made no attempt to conquer the shires of the south-west. He wished to consolidate his newly-won provinces before the last, decisive fight. But meanwhile his remaining adversaries, headed by a chieftain called Kjötve the Wealthy, had formed a firm alliance, and succeeded in securing support from the western Viking realms; the XIXth-century historian Gustav Storm has produced suggestive arguments in favour of the theory that King Olav of Dublin was in command of

the western contingent. Coming with his fleet from the north, King Harald met the navy of his allied enemies in Havsfjord (Hafrsfjord), near the present Stavanger. On the basis of a critical analysis of the Icelandic sources, the great Norwegian historian P. A. Munch pointed to 872 as the probable year of the battle. Harald's poet laureate, Thorbjörn Hornklove, who took part in the battle, has described it in a famous lay. This poem is, in its form, a dialogue between a raven, supposed to symbolise the poet himself, and "a bright-eyed maiden, who seemed a wise valkyrie." The description of the battle begins thus:

Quoth the valkyrie:

Hast thou heard how yonder
in Havsfjord they fought,
the high-born king
with Kjötve the Wealthy?

Quoth the raven:

Ships came from the east,
eager for battle,
with grinning heads
and carved prows.
They were laden with warriors
with white shields,
with western spears
and Welsh swords.

But this mighty fleet was beaten, and the battle ended in Harald's complete victory. Now he could call himself the first King of Norway.

According to the saga, the young King Harald had made the solemn vow, before he set out for his great campaign, not to have his hair cut or combed ere the whole of Norway had been laid under his rule. Apparently his hair profited by this want of treatment, for he was afterwards called "Harald Haarfagre"—meaning "Harald with the beautiful hair."

The traditional English translation is "Harald Fairhair," which may be read in another sense.

Both when, with solemnity, he had his hair cut anew, and afterwards, the new high-king was, according to the saga, celebrated by his friends and followers. But the old aristocrats were furious, understanding that their unrestricted freedom had gone for ever. A great number of them, mostly people belonging to families in the western shires, preferred to leave the country. Thus was initiated the first great emigration to Iceland. According to tradition, it began in 874, when the Norwegian *Mayflower* sailed with the first load of protesting noblemen.

To Harald Fairhair the departure of these malcontents must have been a great relief, for it deprived the remaining opposition of almost all their potential leaders. The pacification of the whole country became, thus, a much easier task than might have been expected. Only from the Vikings in the west had he still something to fear. On the whole, his relations to the already existing Norwegian realms outside Norway presented Harald Fairhair with his gravest problem: should he ignore them, seek co-operation with them or try to conquer them? He chose the golden mean: the Viking settlements in Ireland, Scotland and England were left to themselves, whilst he sent warlike expeditions to the Orkneys, the Shetlands ("Hjaltland") and the Hebrides (the "Sudreys") and laid those islands under the Norwegian throne. Mr. D. W. H. Marshall has, in his interesting little study *Sudreys in Early Viking Times*, found it probable that the first expedition was commanded by the old Viking Ketil Flatnose, and took place between 875 and 880. But although Ketil apparently succeeded in establishing Royal supremacy over the islands, the western Vikings continued to be a nuisance, and even made buccaneering raids on the shores of the homeland. Then, in the 890's, probably in or about 894, King Harald found it necessary to undertake a serious punitive campaign. This time he took command himself, and made first for the west coast of Scotland, everywhere mopping up the Viking nests; then he conquered the Hebrides, and probably visited the Isle of Man. After having secured the

subjection of the Orkneys and the Shetlands, he returned to Norway.

Besides his expeditions to the western isles, two other governing acts of Harald Fairhair may be seen as strokes of his anti-Viking policy. In the first instance, he transferred the more permanent seat of his Government from Vestfold to Karmsund, on the west coast; from this important strategical point he was able to dominate the fairway; the young historian of the 1930's Johan Schreiner has stressed that Karmsund was, also, a well-chosen place for the control of Norway's foreign trade. Secondly, Harald Fairhair sought friendship with his great English contemporary, King Aethelstan the Victorious, and embassies passed between them. Harald's idea was obviously that co-operation might be useful, as both kings constantly had to fight the Vikings. We have also reason to believe that Harald regarded Aethelstan as his "opposite number," to use the modern slogan: just as Harald was the first King of Norway, Aethelstan was the first conqueror who claimed to be lord paramount of all Britain—"*Rex totius Britanniae.*" As a pledge of the friendly relations between the two kings, Harald's son Haakon was brought up at the British court, and was later known as "Haakon Aethelstanfostered."

In his later years, other sons of Harald Fairhair gave him much trouble. The King had, all his life, been a great lover of the gentle sex; besides Gyda from Hordaland, a number of women had been his queens or mistresses, and he had at least nine sons. Regarding each other as rivals to the throne, the boys were constantly quarrelling, and even fighting fratricidal battles. But the strong hand of their father prevented the outbreak of any real civil war. When Harald was eighty years, however, he thought that a younger high-king was needed. In 930 or 932 he, therefore, resigned, after having proclaimed Eric Bloodaxe, his son by a Danish princess, the new King over whole Norway. His last three years he spent in retirement on his large personal estates.

The saga of Harald Fairhair in Snorre's work is rather short, and the few contemporary statements about him tell little but facts. But we can trace his character from his

deeds. He must have been a unique personality. He reached maturity at an extraordinarily young age. Nevertheless, he preserved his strength and power of action until he was eighty. Even in his teens he was a great general and master of amphibious operations. His later punitive expedition to Scotland and the Viking isles shows the same grand planning and resolute execution as the first campaign of his youth. He never lost a battle. His self-confidence as a naval and military leader must, therefore, have been very strong. Nevertheless, when he had reached his national aims he did not wage any unnecessary war. He was content with his originally-planned achievements, and he took no risk of losing them. Apart from the two short expeditions to the west, the victor of Havsfjord gave to his people more than half a century of uninterrupted peace. Universal history knows few, if any, parallels. His self-restraint and self-control were with him to the last. When, at the age of eighty, he felt his vitality weaken, he left the throne on his own initiative; he did not allow the shades of old age to eclipse the grandeur of his youth and manhood.

In foreign politics he looked forward. Although he was a heathen and a warrior himself, he thought that the Viking raids had outlived themselves. He wished strong but peaceful national states in co-operation for common security. In order to establish a firm basis for this policy, he initiated friendly relations with Denmark and England.

His internal rule was firm, maybe hard. But the saga does not tell of any cruelty or atrocity committed by himself or in his name during peacetime. It is also noteworthy that he did not interfere either with the emigration to Iceland or with the foundation of the Icelandic State, although this sort of a republic was created by his enemies and tried to embody political principles laid down in direct opposition to his new kingdom. He also left the democracy of law and judicial proceedings in Norway wholly unimpaired.

It is to be admitted that his work had been prepared by his father. The relation between Halvdan Svarte and Harald Fairhair shows, in several respects, parallels to that between Philip of Macedonia and Alexander the Great or that between

Pepin and Charlemagne. But in ideas, as in reality, Halvdan Svarte was the last of the petty kings, Harald Fairhair the first of the national Kings of Norway.

The saga of Harald Fairhair was written by descendants of his protesting and departing adversaries. It speaks in favour of the Norwegian King, as well as that of his Icelandic biographers, that his picture to-day stands out before us with no disfiguring trace of inherited hatred.

In Norway, a whole grateful people paid homage to the remembrance of Harald Fairhair at the millennium of 1872. On this occasion, Henrik Ibsen competed successfully with the old Hornklove, creating the most powerful historical poem in Norwegian literature.

But also outside Norway Harald Fairhair is able to arouse interest even in our own times. As an example, it may be mentioned that an English author, Sir Henry Howorth, in 1920 published a monograph on the old king of not less than 252 pages.

Eric Bloodaxe was a Viking of the old school. But during the long internal peace under Harald's reign the people had taken a dislike to the Vikings; they longed for a more gentle ruler, their thoughts went westwards, and Haakon Shetelig is probably right in the theory that the mightiest nobleman on the north-west coast, Earl Sigurd of Lade, sent for the young Prince Haakon.

According to the saga, the childless King Aethelstan was very fond of his foster-son, and favoured him; he gave him a first-class education—and a sharp sword. Also, Haakon came back to Norway with British vessels, British manpower and British equipment. But he had no need to fight. He was received with open arms. His father had been obliged to conquer the country in heavy battles. Haakon Aethelstan-fostered simply appealed to his people and won the whole of Norway without combat.

The rejected Eric Bloodaxe fled to England, where he was made Earl of Northumbria. In the Saxon chronicle, however, the first mention of him refers to the year 948. Based on this fact, Professor Halfdan Koht tried, in the 1920's, to subvert

the traditional chronology of Norwegian medieval history, which was mainly based on the authority of the Icelandic sources. Going back from 948 and computing the probable length of generations, he arrived at the conclusion that Harald Fairhair was born as late as about 865, and that the battle of Havsfjord, consequently, must have taken place much later than 872. But a computation of probable length of generations involves a most disputable method, as such probabilities can only be calculated on the basis of averages drawn from a great number of observations, and as it is inadmissible to apply any such average to a small number of cases. Besides, Professor Koht's theory does not fit in with the chronology which Mr. D. W. Hunter Marshall has tried to fix for contemporary events in the outlands. Last, but not least, Mr. Kendrick attaches no great importance to the fact that the Anglo-Saxon chronicle does not mention Eric Bloodaxe before the year 948, as he finds it probable that Eric received his earldom from Aethelstan himself, and this glorious King died in 940; Mr. Kendrick's theory about Eric is, in reality, in perfect concert with the traditional chronology, which places Eric's flight from Norway to 935 or, at the latest, 937. On the whole, Professor Koht's arguments are not conclusive, and it seems wise to retain the old reckoning.[1]

According to the traditional chronology, Haakon Aethelstanfostered was King from 935 or 937 to 961. His reign marks a happy and prosperous period. He was, in a way, chosen by the people, and he ruled in accordance with the wishes of the people. No wonder that he was called "the Good." But the sons of Eric Bloodaxe tried to win back the kingdom of their father, and Haakon fell in a victorious battle against them at Fitjar; the action is described in mighty rhythms by the contemporary poet Eyvind Skaldaspiller.

The eldest surviving son of Eric, Harald Greycloak, was now accepted as high-king. But although he was a brave and adventurous ruler, who even made a famous expedition

[1] I regret that I had not Professor Koht's own treatise before me while this discussion of his theory was written. Such things happen in wartime. But I could not, for this reason, omit the whole question.

to Archangel, he never became popular; fate was, also, hard to him, as his reign was marked by a series of bad seasons, and the superstitious peasants placed the responsibility for the cold weather on the King. In 970 he was killed in Denmark.

After Harald's death, Earl Haakon of Lade, the son of Earl Sigurd, received Danish help to win the power in Norway. In return he had to acknowledge the Danish King, Harald Bluetooth, as his overlord, and when the Germans, led by Emperor Otto II, attacked Denmark in 974, Earl Haakon, with a Norwegian contingent, hurried to help. It was the first time a Norwegian army fought against German aggression.

Earl Haakon defended successfully the Danish fortification Danevirke between Slesvig and Hollingsted, but when winter approached he withdrew the Norwegian troops to his ships. After heavy new fights the weakened defenders had to retire, and Harald Bluetooth found it wise to accept the German conditions of peace. It was only natural that these events resulted in tension between King Harald and Earl Haakon. Relations between them worsened when the earl, who was a convinced believer in Odin and Thor, refused to introduce Christianity to Norway. Harald Bluetooth, in an effort to impose his will upon the disobedient earl by force, succeeded in conquering the Vik, but the earl, in return, broke off every connection with his overlord, and ruled independently in the rest of the country. Svein Forkbeard, the son and successor of Harald Bluetooth, hoped to open his reign with an effective conquest of all Norway, and sent a fleet of sixty magnificent vessels northwards. According to the sagas the ships were manned by the famous Danish Vikings from Jomsborg, on the southern shore of the Baltic, but the truth of this tale has been seriously assailed by the Swedish professor Lauritz Weibull. However this may be, it seems certain that the Danish fleet sailed along the Norwegian shores in December, 986. Earl Haakon succeeded in collecting 180 ships, most of them small and miserable craft. The two fleets met in Hjörungavaag, where Earl Haakon won a decisive victory; the enemies had to flee after having

lost thirty-five ships. Apparently, the Danish grip on the Vik loosened after this battle.

Although Earl Haakon was widely celebrated as the victor of Hjörungavaag, he did not succeed in maintaining his popularity; his rule was too arbitrary and cruel. In some places the peasants revolted against him, and he seems to have been deserted by most of his men when, in 995, a descendant of Harald Fairhair, Olav Tryggvason, arrived from England. On his flight the earl was assassinated by one of his thralls, and no one disputed Olav's right to assume the Royal title. But the new King found the country in a kind of disintegration, as Earl Haakon, in his later days, had been unable to exercise sufficient power over the governors of various shires. King Olav had, therefore, a difficult task before him. Nevertheless, after a few years the unity of the State was completely re-established. Norway appeared again as a real kingdom.

When Olav Tryggvason in so short a time succeeded in his restoration plan, this was not due to his own merits alone. He had a mighty ally: the remembrance of his progenitor, Harald Fairhair. More than sixty years had elapsed since the founder of the realm was buried at Karmsund. But during those six decades the veneration for him had grown, and his great idea had become a living force. All good Norsemen now agreed on this one thing: the work of Harald Fairhair must not be allowed to crumble, Norway must remain a kingdom, one and united, as he had made it. Harald Fairhair's victorious campaign did not end with the battle in Havsfjord. It continued after his death. Indeed, it is still going on all over Norway during the Second World War.

VII

THE HISTORY OF THE NORWEGIAN COMMONWEALTH

Mr. Winston Churchill, in his marvellous essay on the Earl of Rosebery, has drawn attention to the fact that it was this almost forgotten Liberal leader who coined the ingenious phrase of the British Empire as "a Commonwealth of Nations." The expression "commonwealth" may also be applied to the totality of Norwegian realms during medieval times. Only, we have to remember that it was one nation, and one nation alone, who populated both the mother-land and the "outlands" or the "scatlands" (the tributary lands), as the old Norsemen called their island dependencies. Even the Icelanders, who for more than 200 years maintained their political freedom, were, in their origin, pure Norwegians. The political ties between the outlands and Norway had, however, no intimate character, and were not well defined; each group of islands managed all the time to settle its own internal affairs in accordance with traditional procedures, and the earls or other governors appointed by the King were not always obedient and faithful to their overlord. But a sort of ideal unity existed throughout the centuries; the empire was a force in being, and new family connections were constantly established. The outlands absorbed, also, the population surplus of Norway, and opened great opportunities for young ambitious men from the mother country.

As long as the Viking raids continued, however, the young chieftains preferred to win their spurs on the battle-fields in England, Ireland or France.

In the latter half of the Xth century the most brilliant of these young Viking leaders was Olav Tryggvason. A direct descendant of Harald Fairhair, he had, as a child, been pursued by the mother of Harald Greycloak, who feared every possible aspirant to the throne; but his family had succeeded in bringing him to Russia, and there he lived until he was grown up. In 991 he suddenly appeared on the Thames, together with two other Scandinavian chieftains.

The Vikings won a great battle near Maldon against Duke Brihtnoth, of the East Saxons, and on the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, King Aethelred concluded a humiliating peace treaty with the young invaders, paying them a big sum in silver. Three years later Olav was joined by Svein Forkbeard; with a fleet of ninety-four ships they sailed up the Thames and attacked London. But the citizens repelled them, inflicting heavy losses on the Vikings. Olav, however, only withdrew in order to transfer his attack to other less defended places. He plundered along the coast of Essex, Kent, Sussex and Hampshire. Aethelred found it wise to make peace a second time, again paying a heavy tribute in ready silver. But, in return, Olav consented to adopt the Christian faith; he was brought in honour to Andover and baptised, with Aethelred himself as sponsor. Moreover, he promised not to attack England any more, and he kept his word. His mind was now bent on other great plans. To begin with, he secured support from the Hebrides, the Orkneys and Caithness. Then he sailed eastwards for Norway, and, thanks to the assassination of Earl Haakon, he soon succeeded in taking possession of the whole country.

Olav Tryggvason was not the first King of Norway who came back to his country from the west after having been baptised. Haakon Aethelstanfostered and Harald Greycloak were both Christians when they returned to their homeland. But neither of them had been able to do anything serious for their new religion; Haakon Aethelstanfostered was even forced to abjure his faith. Olav Tryggvason, on the other hand, had no intention of deferring to the heathens. His aim was to christianise Norway. He seems to have taken to his new religion with an unwonted fervour. According to the saga, he said to his friends and kinsmen that he would either introduce Christendom all over the country or die. His warriors supported him whole-heartedly, but in some districts he met stiff resistance, and, if he found it desirable, he was not afraid of using force. The success he undoubtedly achieved was more due to his threatening attitude than to preaching and persuasion. Nevertheless, it would certainly be wrong to

underestimate the lasting results of Olav's missionary activity. In a few years he laid the foundation of Christendom in Norway. Recognising the unity of the whole Norwegian commonwealth, he took measures to christianise also the Hebrides, the Orkneys and the Faroes, Iceland and even Greenland. He sent out to the dependencies young, newly-baptised chieftains, who had orders to proclaim the introduction of Christianity in the King's name, and organise baptism. Leiv Ericsson was baptised on Olav's initiative; he brought the new belief to the Greenland settlements before he started for his great expedition to the unknown west. The efforts of the King had, perhaps, their greatest success in Iceland. As that country was a State of its own, a special policy had to be adopted there. A proposal for the acknowledgment of Christianity as official religion was brought before the Althing; opinions were divided, but the decision was relegated to the president, Torgeir, who prescribed that Christianity, on certain conditions, should be recognised as legal. This happened in the year 1000.

The foreign policy of Olav Tryggvason had the same personal touch as the raids of his youth and his later fight for Christendom. The saga records that he proposed marriage to a Swedish dowager queen, Sigrid the Bold, apparently in order to obtain influence in Sweden, but when she refused to be baptised he broke off every relation with her, and even offended her mortally. When, afterwards, she was married to Olav's old Viking comrade, King Svein of Denmark, she succeeded in bringing about a Swedish-Danish alliance against her former suitor. Earl Haakon's son, Eric, joined them, in order to revenge his father. In the spring of the year 1000, Olav Tryggvason then sailed with a small fleet, headed by his new brilliant war-ship, *Serpent the Long*, to the south-eastern coast of the Baltic; as particularly stressed by Johan Schreiner, his intention must have been to form a counter-alliance against Sweden and Denmark, for he opened negotiations with the Polish King, Boleslav the Mighty, the conqueror of Pomerania, who was a well-known adversary of Svein Forkbeard. As far as we can conclude from the sources, he succeeded in establishing a Polish-Norwegian understanding. But on his way

back Olav Tryggvason was trapped. According to the saga, the Jomsviking Earl Sigvalde pretended to be siding with the Norsemen and let his large fleet join Olav, but simultaneously he communicated secretly with the Danes, and led the unsuspecting Norwegian King into an ambush. Near the small inlet of Svold, in the neighbourhood of Rügen, three well-manned fleets were waiting; there lay Danes under Svein, Norwegian rebels under Eric, and Swedes under Olof the Tax-King. After a ferocious battle *Serpent the Long* was boarded, and Olav Tryggvason jumped into the sea in order not to be taken prisoner. The legend told that his life was saved in some mysterious way. "But," says the saga, "however this may be, Olav Tryggvason came never back to his kingdom in Norway."

After Olav's death this kingdom of his was divided between the victors. Svein took the Vik and the Uplands; Olof Bohuslen, Möre and Tröndelag; the sons of Earl Haakon the remainder. For sixteen years Norway was thus split up, and partly ruled by foreign kings.

Then there appeared on the scene a second Olav of the Fairhair House, coming from England, just as the first Olav. Snorre Sturlason gives a long and detailed narrative of his previous big Viking exploits, but, unlike those of Olav Tryggvason, they cannot be ascertained from western chronicles. Mr. Kendrick is especially sceptical about Snorre's dramatic story of the second Olav's successful attack on London Bridge, although it is supported by admiring skald lays from his own times. Undisputed only is the fact that he took part in many battles on English soil, siding with King Aethelred against the Danes.

It was in 1015 that Olav landed. He succeeded, by chance, in capturing Eric's son, Earl Haakon, and the year after he beat Eric's brother, Earl Svein, at the battle of Nesjar. As the Danish King, Knut or Canute the Mighty, at that time had his hands full with the conquest of England, this single victory proved to be sufficient for realisation of his daring plan for the conquest of Norway: he was accepted as King all over the country. But the Swedes were still masters in Bohuslen and the eastern Vik. After four years of warfare,

however, Olav obtained a treaty with Olof Tax-King, which regained for Norway most of her lost territorial rights. It may well be that the Swedish King accepted the agreement because he feared the growing power of King Knut, and regarded his Norwegian adversary as a desirable ally against a possible common enemy.

The second Olav is the hero of Snorre, who has given the most detailed account of his thirteen years on the throne. "The Saga of Olav Haraldsson" takes up the greater part of Snorre's imposing historic work. Modern Nordic researchers, on the other hand, have a tendency to regard most of Snorre's tales as pure fiction. The Icelandic saga-writer, however, based his narrative not only on skald lays from Olav's own times, but also on a richness of traditions carried down by a great number of families, and the descriptions he has given us of the manifold events between 1016 and 1029 do not suffer from any inherent inconsistency or improbability. Neither is his hero idealised in any untrustworthy way. Snorre's Olav is a man of changing moods and uncertain temper; he is often generous and noble, but acts occasionally in a cruel or mean way; his policy is systematic and purposeful, but at times unnecessarily provoking and even unwise; as a military leader he shows great qualities in actual battle, but is no great planner, and he is inclined to make rash resolutions. The two most constant traits in his character are religious zeal and an unquenchable love of beautiful women.

Happily, all sources agree as to the sequence of the main events during his reign.

The first ten years he devoted to a firmer establishment of Christianity. Olav Tryggvason had satisfied himself with bringing people to baptism; Olav Haraldsson organised the religious service. We may put it this way: Olav Tryggvason introduced Christendom, whilst Olav Haraldsson introduced the Church. And in his ecclesiastical policy, Olav Haraldsson succeeded in establishing an intimate and effective co-operation between spiritual and secular authorities; it is chiefly thanks to his basal work that Norway, unlike most other Christian countries, throughout the Middle Ages enjoyed the benefit of possessing a nationally-minded Church. Indeed,

modern historians, like Edvard Bull and Johan Schreiner, are of opinion that his co-operation with the clergy was of the highest importance for the consolidation of the State.

Olav's missionary activity brought him in opposition to that class which might be termed "nobility." Through the growth of mutual aversions the gulf between him and the old chieftains was constantly widened. In 1027, the most renowned among them, Erling Skjalgsson of Sole, at last revolted, but was taken prisoner after a lost battle, and killed by an over-officious Royal warrior. After that unlucky event the remaining months of Olav's reign were filled with quarrels, and even combats, between him and the noblemen. When Knut the Mighty, now ruler of England as well as of Denmark, sailed to Norway in the year 1028 at the head of 1,400 warships, this foreign sovereign could reckon on an enthusiastic welcome by the leading personalities of the more important shires. Olav did not try to fight, but fled, in 1029, to his brother-in-law, Yaroslav, the Swedish Grand-Prince of Kiev. Next summer he returned. At the head of a small band of his faithful friends who had taken refuge in Sweden, and joined by Swedish auxiliaries, he marched towards Trondheim. But a big army of peasants, commanded by well-known noblemen, met him at Stiklestad. After a hard fight Olav was beaten and killed. The traditional date of the battle is the 29th of July, still celebrated in Norway as the "Olav-day," and the late Dr. Landmark has recently disproved modern objections to this old reckoning.

Is it not illogical to celebrate a day of national defeat? Yes—if the defeat puts an end to a national evolution. But the battle of Stiklestad did just the opposite. Only some days after Olav's death the rumour circulated that miracles had taken place when he was buried, and other happenings of transcendent character were said to have been worked at his tomb. The report spread all over the country like wildfire. Olav's former adversaries began to regret and were converted to the Christian belief. The hard oppression to which the population was subjected in the years subsequent to the battle of Stiklestad by Queen Aelfgifu of Northampton, who ruled the country as guardian of Knut's minor son,

Svein, was generally held to be a divine punishment for the evil fight against the legal king. Thus, religious feeling and national will united once more, and the defunct Olav Haraldsson fulfilled the mission that the living Olav Haraldsson had failed to perform. More than a century later, in 1164, the fallen King was even canonised and declared the patron saint of Norway; his fame spread throughout the Christian world; in England churches are dedicated to him.

If we compare the fate of St. Olav with that of Olav Tryggvason, we have to observe striking parallels. Both kings were descendants of Harald Fairhair. Both grew up as fatherless refugees. Both won their first laurels through Viking exploits in England. Both planned to win the throne of their ancestors. Both landed on the west coast of Norway after a happy crossing of the North Sea. Both gained their first success against an Earl Haakon of Lade. Both met only weak resistance from their countrymen, and were in a short time recognised as lawful kings by the whole population. Both devoted the main part of their activities as kings to the introduction of Christianity. Both experienced a state of war with Sweden as well as Denmark. Both of them were killed in losing battles, named after places beginning with the letter "S." Both kings were succeeded by foreign rulers, but after their death both of them were made the heroes of fantastic legends. If, therefore, both kings had belonged to an earlier period, which had left no contemporary evidences, we would undoubtedly have been confronted with a most ingenious theory of the 1920's, proving in a scientific and irrefutable way that there never had existed two missionary Kings Olav, but that the tales of Olav Haraldsson were only later, and consequently more detailed and less reliable, stories of the only real missionary King: Olav Tryggvason. However, "the postman always rings twice"—even history sometimes adds fuel to that curious statement.

After the battle of Svold the foreign rule had lasted for nearly sixteen years. After the battle of Stiklestad it lasted only five. In 1035 a deputation of Norse noblemen, headed by the great chieftain Einar Tambarskelvar, went to Russia to fetch the young Prince Magnus, St. Olav's son. When the boy came back to his country he was received by an exultant

people. Queen Aelfgifu fled with the young King Svein. Before the year had come to its end Magnus Haraldsson was proclaimed King by all the big Things. The Danes made no effort to retake Norway. Their reasons for acquiescing in the suddenly-changed conditions were mostly of a dynastic character. The fact was that Knut the Mighty died in the same year as Magnus returned from Russia, King Svein followed him to the grave soon after, and his widely-extended realm was divided between two of his other sons: Harald Harefoot became King of England, the so-called "Hardeknut" King of Denmark. Neither of them were great rulers. Besides, Hardeknut found himself face to face with an overwhelming danger which threatened his country from the south-east: the Wends, that warlike Slav tribe which later on became a dominant element of the so-called "Germanic" Prussian people, were expanding their realm all along the southern Baltic shores and approached Danish spheres of interest. It may be that the gloomy prospect of a Wendish invasion gives the background for the strange Danish-Norwegian agreement which was concluded a short time after the death of Knut the Mighty: the Danes recognised Magnus as King of Norway and the Norwegians Hardeknut as King of Denmark, but if either of them died without leaving a son, the other one should inherit his realm.

In spite of the Wendish threat, Hardeknut, on learning that his brother Harald had died, left for the western part of his father's empire in order to secure the English throne. He was also recognised as King of England, but died soon afterwards and was buried in Winchester. As a consequence, the Danish agreement with the Norwegians became suddenly a reality. The Danes made no effort to disavow it: in 1042 Magnus Haraldsson was legally proclaimed King of Denmark also. For the first time in history the King of Norway was, beyond all dispute, the mightiest monarch of the north.

But Magnus was a modest man, and he seems to have doubted the possibility of ruling Denmark effectively from overseas. He chose to treat his new country as a unity of its own, and placed its internal affairs under the administration of a residing earl, appointing a born Dane for this post. But his

choice was dangerous: he gave the earldom to Svein Estridsson, who was the grandson of Svein Forkbeard, by his daughter. The saga tells that Einar Tambarskelvar, on hearing the King's resolution, said to him: "Too great an earl, too great an earl, foster-son!"

Magnus would not listen to Einar. But as soon as the King was back again in Norway, Svein began intriguing against him, and when, the following spring, Magnus decided to deal with the threat from the south, he did not get support from his Danish earl. He had, however, raised a great amphibious force in Norway. His first aim was to crush the power of the Jomsvikings. They had denied that they owed allegiance to Magnus, and it must have been clear to him that, at any time, they might throw in their lot with the Wends. In order to prevent them from joining the enemy he sailed straight for Jomsborg, took this remaining Viking stronghold by storm, and destroyed it utterly with fire and sword. Thus Olav Tryggvason was revenged, forty-three years after the battle of Svold.

As the Wends, themselves, did not dispose of any naval force, Magnus found it expedient to send the greater part of his war-ships home to Norway, but he remained in Denmark. In the early autumn the great Wendish army was reported to be approaching. Magnus mobilised the Danes and was joined by a Saxon duke. With a united Norwegian, Danish, and Saxon force he met the Wends at Lyrskog Heath, on the 28th of September, 1043. The battle was hard, but Magnus won a tremendous victory, and a great part of the Wendish army was wiped out; Adam of Bremen asserts that the Wends lost 15,000 men killed. The Slavs did not renew their efforts of invasion: Denmark was saved.

The battle of Lyrskog Heath may be termed one of the most decisive events in Nordic history. But the Danes showed no manifest gratitude towards Magnus. They wished to be independent of the Norwegian King, and the greater part of the people supported Earl Svein when he openly challenged Magnus. Nevertheless, Magnus was always victorious, and remained the real ruler of Denmark throughout his lifetime. But he died at a very young age, as early as 1047. On his

death-bed, in Jutland, he left Denmark to Svein Estridsson, whilst the Norwegian throne fell to St. Olav's half-brother, Harald Sigurdsson, whom he had already recognised in the previous year as King and co-regent.

Like Haakon Aethelstanfostered, Magnus, while still living, was given the epithet "the Good," and he was more beloved than any of his predecessors. But a saga-writer like Snorre had apparently some difficulties in understanding him. Magnus was, also, a new type on the Norwegian throne. Olav Tryggvason and St. Olav had both been champions of Christianity, but the new belief had not altered their inborn Viking mentality. Magnus was a Christian in spirit and truth. He even fancied that he, in his dreams, received warnings or encouraging messages from his late father. Like Harald Fairhair, he never lost a battle, and must certainly have been a great general, but he was no lover of war, and preferred peaceful solutions, even if bought dearly. He was a wise ruler, but he was not fond of power; only too willingly did he entrust Svein Estridsson with the home rule of Denmark and Harald Sigurdsson with the co-regency. Moreover, Magnus showed a respect for foreign nationalities that has seldom been reached, even by statesmen in modern times. Thus, it was certainly a fear of violating Danish nationality which induced him first to appoint Svein Estridsson as earl, and later to leave him Denmark as a legal kingdom. The saga has also handed down to us a story of his relations with the English which is worth while remembering. As the successor of Hardeknut, Magnus regarded himself the legal heir to the English throne. Hearing that the nobility of England had proclaimed as King a son of Aethelred, Edward the Confessor, he sent ambassadors to the English court demanding to be recognised as overlord. When he received the refusal of Edward, the saga says, he remarked: "I think that it is right and just to let King Edward keep his realm without any interference from my side, whilst I will stand by the realms which God dedicated to me."

With the half-brother of Magnus the Good, Harald Sigurdsson, a real Viking again ascended to the Norwegian throne. He was akin to Olav Tryggvason. In his 'teens he had fought under St. Olav in the battle of Stiklestad. After

the defeat he went abroad. For a while he visited the court of Kiev. But he won his spurs as warrior farther south. He joined the "foreign legion" of Byzantium, which had been established by Emperor Basilios II. After having taken part in revolutions as well as wars, he obtained a high charge. His exploits in the East Roman Empire are known not only from Icelandic sagas, but also from Greek chronicles. When he returned home, he brought with him sufficient gold and silver for an extensive coinage through two decades; in the first years he even minted full-weight coins. Thanks not only to his silver and gold, but also to the heroic legends connected with his name, he enlisted a strong and forceful bodyguard, which made him rather independent of the "leidang," and enabled him to maintain a stricter order in his realm than any earlier Norwegian King.

To a man like Harald Sigurdsson the death-bed renunciation of the Danish throne which Magnus had made on behalf of his successors was certainly most unwelcome. He never recognised that generous act. But after Magnus had died Harald could not perusade the Norwegian chieftains to open war. They wished to go home in order to bury their beloved king in the Trondheim church; according to the saga, Einar Tambarskelvar said: "I will rather follow the dead King Magnus than any other King who is alive." Later Harald took revenge on the old foster-father of Magnus, putting him to death in Trondheim; it is probable that it was partly in recollection of this deed that he was called "Harald the Ruthless." After having organised his bodyguard he was, however, able to open hostilities against Svein Estridsson, and various campaigns in Denmark occupied much of his reign. Generally Harald held the upper hand, and with a fleet of 180 ships he won a big victory over a much bigger Danish fleet at the Nis River, in Halland. But he was not strong enough to benefit sufficiently even by this victory, and in the peace of the Göta River, in 1064, only two years after the Nis River battle, he recognised the independence of Denmark.

Meanwhile, King Harald had not renounced that claim to the English throne which Magnus the Good put forward. He had only postponed action, pending the final result of his con-

tinuous struggle for the possession of Denmark. But in 1066 he was especially called upon to invade England. The request was brought him by Tostig, the former Earl of Northumbria, the elder brother of Harold Godwineson, who, on the 6th of January that year, had been elected King of England in succession to the deceased Edward Confessor. Tostig had been deprived of his army command as well as of his earldom, and now sued for Norwegian support. Harald Sigurdsson came to the conclusion that a good opportunity was offered. He equipped a big fleet and sailed westwards; the saga informs us that he had 240 war-ships; against the background of our knowledge of similar enterprises, we have to accept this statement as most plausible.

The course was first set for the Orkneys, where he obtained many recruits from the Scottish Isles and the Isle of Man; thence he made his way south, joined his forces with those of Tostig, and landed in Cleveland. Scarborough was taken and plundered. Next the combined fleets made for the Humber. Here an English army approached, commanded by the two earls, Edwin of Mercia and Morkere of Northumbria. On the 20th of September Harald attacked the earls at Fulford, two miles outside York. The result was a complete Norwegian victory, and York itself surrendered without resistance. But while the invading troops were still occupied with establishing their base in this important town, Harald Sigurdsson, who had moved inland with a detachment of his army, was attacked by the English six or seven miles to the east, at Stamford Bridge, on the Derwent. It was Harold Godwineson himself who had arrived with his main force. Instead of taking the cautious advice of Tostig, to retire provisionally to the town and the fleet, Harald Sigurdsson chose to accept battle. During the wild fight that followed both he and Tostig were killed, and reinforcements from York, hurrying up in great haste under the command of Eystein Orre, were not able to avert the defeat. The Norwegian effort of conquering England had definitely failed. Olav, the son of King Harald, took the great fleet back, first to the Orkneys, then home to Norway.

The battle of Stamford Bridge was fought on the 25th of September, 1066. Two days later Harold Godwineson

received news that Duke William of Normandy, another pretender to the English throne, had landed at Pevensey. Harold at once turned south. But his army had suffered too much at the hands of the Norwegians. In the battle of Hastings, on October the 14th, he was decisively beaten by the Normans, being himself mortally wounded. Duke William became the Conqueror of England.

Professor Trevelyan, in his *History of England*, which enjoyed a big sale also in Norway, sums up the relation between the Norwegian and the Norman attacks of 1066 in the following words, which will probably meet with general approval: "Harold might have repelled either enemy alone; he sank beneath the double attack, and the Norman, through luck and conduct, rose the only winner."

Strange, on the other hand, sounds Professor Trevelyan's contention that the attacks of 1066 constituted "the dramatic climax of the long competition between the Nordic countries and Latin Europe for the prize of England." In fact, the weak successors of Charles the Great could never hope for a military conquest of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom in Great Britain, and speaking about the cultural competition, it seems somewhat artificial to reckon the descendants of Rollo and his Vikings as genuine representatives of "Latin Europe." In our century of biology such a view appears surprisingly old-fashioned. It would seem more natural to stress that William the Conqueror was the successor of that great Norwegian chieftain.

In any case, the first Norman ruler of England was much more a Viking than the new king of Norway, Olav Kyrre, who reigned over his country in the twenty-seven years up to 1093, at first in co-regentship with his brother Magnus, who at a very young age died on a sick bed. Olav was a peacemaker and a peace-lover. He established good relationships with the neighbouring countries, partly by instigating an inter-Nordic matrimonial policy. No warlike enterprise was started from Norway during his reign. But even he prepared for war. Thus he enlarged the Royal bodyguard, and gave it higher pay.

Snorre concludes his "Saga of Olav Kyrre" by saying: "He was a most popular king, and during his reign Norway

rose in wealth and splendour." But the Icelandic historian has few positive facts to tell of this progressive period. It is illustrating to compare the length of the sagas he has devoted to the three first kings who bore the name of "Olav." In Finnur Jònsson's last textual edition (from 1936), the saga of Olav Tryggvason fills seventy-seven closely printed pages, and the saga of St. Olav boasts 239, but Olav Kyrre is disposed of in little more than three pages. Snorre's reticence has made the task difficult for modern historians also. In the last great publication on Norwegian history, the ten volumes that were started under the supervision of Edvard Bull in 1929, the editor-in-chief has not been able to write more than two pages about Olav Kyrre. With reference to this King, we have certainly to endorse the old saying that the happiest times have no history.

Magnus Barefoot, who succeeded his father, Olav Kyrre, in 1093, was more like Harald Sigurdsson. There had again ascended to the throne a man of action, a warrior and a great Viking. His friends often warned him, being afraid of his foolhardiness. One of his replies has been handed down to us. He used to say: "Of a king glory shall be demanded, not a long life." Throughout his reign he lived up to that motto. But behind his various campaigns it is easy to discern one combining idea: he wished to bring the disunited parts of the Norwegian commonwealth closer together and re-establish the firm sovereignty of the King over the "outlands." This was a most natural aim of Norwegian policy. Norsemen were in possession of the Faroes, the Orkneys, the Shetlands and the Hebrides; the Norwegian realm of Dublin was still in existence; Norsemen were masters in the Isle of Man, and the Orkney earl, Thorfinn the Mighty, who died in 1064, had been recognised as overlord of all northern and western Scotland, holding these lands in fief for the King of Norway. But the tribute to the King, the "scat," was not regularly paid, and the connections with the motherland continued to be loose.

In 1098 Magnus sailed westwards. He captured two rebellious earls in the Orkneys and replaced them by his own son, Sigurd, re-established the Royal power in the Hebrides,

conquered the Isle of Man, where an independent king was then in power, and won the peninsula of Kintyre from the Scottish King. Then he turned south to Anglesey. This island was in the hands of two Norman earls, Hugh of Chester and Hugh of Shrewsbury. They were beaten in a big battle, and the greater part of Anglesey laid under Norwegian sceptre.

The next campaign of Magnus was directed against Sweden. It is obvious that he intended to conquer some part of Swedish territory. He did not succeed in this, as the peace agreement of Konghelle, where the three Nordic Kings had a meeting, re-affirmed the old possessions of each King. Nevertheless, Edvard Bull reckons the peace of Konghelle as an achievement because the disputed border-line was definitely fixed. Magnus married the Swedish Princess Margaret, who received the name "the Maid of Peace."

In a third and last campaign Magnus again turned westwards. This time, too, he visited the Orkneys, the Hebrides and the Isle of Man, consolidating the power of the King. But his great aim was now Ireland. He occupied Dublin, and then turned to Ulster. But one day, when, with a rather small force, he had left his ships searching for cattle, he was surprised by an Irish army, and fell in the fight, on the 24th of August, 1103. Thus, the battle of Stamford Bridge was repeated, thirty-seven years later, near Strangford Loch in Ireland.

Magnus Barefoot was succeeded by his three sons, Sigurd, Eystein and Olav. Only Sigurd had inherited the Viking mentality of his father. But he did not lead his country into war, as he found another outlet for his adventurous desires. It was the age of the crusades. Sigurd equipped a big fleet and sailed for the holy land. Fighting side by side with a Venetian contingent, he took part in King Baldwin I's storm of Sidon in 1110, and returned via Byzantium. In the history of Norway he is known as Sigurd the Crusader.

Olav was the first of the kings to die. The people feared a serious struggle between the two remaining brothers, but although they often quarrelled, they kept peace, and Norway had a prosperous and happy time up to 1130, when Sigurd,

as the last surviving son of Magnus Barefoot, died in Oslo. After his death, however, the country was thrown into a series of dynastic struggles and civil wars, lasting up to 1240.

To posterity the historic details of this long period are of extremely small interest. Björnson and Ibsen wrote, however, shortly after the middle of the XIXth century, mighty historic dramas with motives from the conflicts. Thus it happens that the present Norwegian generations have borrowed their opinions on the men and events of those medieval times not from saga-writers and historians, but from great modern poets. We see the early part of the period in the light of Björnson's "Sigurd Slembe," whilst our knowledge of its final phase is derived from Ibsen's "The Pretenders." Contributing to this dominance of the dramatists is the deplorable fact that Snorre finishes up his popular saga-book with his description of the battle of Re, which took place early in January, 1177.

For the sake of chronology it seems practical to record the line of kings for the period of civil wars. It may be tabulated as follows: Magnus the Blinded 1130–35, Harald Gille 1130–36, Sigurd Munn 1136–55, Eystein Haraldsson 1136–57, Inge Crooked-Back 1136–61, Haakon Broad-Shoulder 1161–62, Magnus Erlingsson 1162–84, Sverre 1177–1202, Haakon Sverresson 1202–04, Guttorm 1204, Inge Baardsson 1204–17, Erling Steinvegg 1204–07, Philippus Simonsson 1207–17, and finally Haakon Haakonsson 1217–63. This table speaks for itself. It reveals a time of confusion. But it could be enlarged by another long and still more confused list, tabulating all those pretenders who took part in the struggles without ever being recognised as kings.

Up to 1162 all the kings belonged to the male line of the Ynglings, or at least pretended to do so, assuming that Harald the Ruthless was right in his assertion as descendant of one of Harald Fairhair's illegitimate sons. Magnus Erlingsson, however, belonged to a female line, his mother being the daughter of Sigurd the Crusader. As his enemies used this fact as a basis for denying his right to the throne, his father found it wise to get his kingship confirmed by the Church

in a solemn form, and succeeded in having him crowned by the newly-appointed national archbishop; a Papal legate was present. The ceremony took place in 1163 or 1164. At a later time in Magnus Erlingsson's reign a special provision concerning the succession to the throne was accepted by the Thing of the western shires, the Gulathing. It read as follows: "The next is this, that the King of Norway shall be one who is born a legitimate son of a King of Norway, unless he is dominated by evil-mindedness or is lacking in wits. And if such faults shall deprive the oldest son of his kingship, it shall pass to that one of his brothers, a son of the same father, who shall seem the best qualified to the archbishop, the bishops, and twelve of the most prudent men of each bishopric, whom the bishops shall appoint to act with them." If this provision had for its purpose the end of the struggles between pretenders, it was worded in a most unhappy way. Not only could the legal meaning of the rules be subject to serious disputes, but in addition, the prescribed procedures offered great opportunities for the Church to interfere in purely political decisions. This extension of divine power was underlined by the chosen systematism, as the new provision was included in the so-called "Christian Law." The result was, also, that disagreements between bishops and politicians repeatedly arose; for the first time in Norwegian history King and Church were not always in concert. But this does not mean that the Church suddenly adopted an anti-national policy.

The man whose appearance on the scene gave rise to a new cleavage of parties, was Sverre. He was born in the Faroes, and was originally educated as a priest. However, his mother confessed to him that he was an illegitimate son of King Sigurd Munn. No proof could be delivered for her contention, but only professional historians would find such want of evidence surprising. To Sverre, his mother's word seems, at least, to have been sufficient. He went to Norway with the intention of trying his chances. But he found that the opportunities were not the best, and continued to Vermland, in Sweden. There, in 1177, he met a fleeing flock of beaten and dejected Norwegian rioters. They were called "Birch-

shanks," because they had wound birch-bark round their legs. Their former leader, Eystein Meyla, had been killed in the lost battle of Re. Sverre offered to take command, revealing to them that he was the son of Sigurd Munn. The Birchshanks accepted him, and he led them back to Norway. For more than two years they had to suffer want and even hunger. But in the summer of 1177 Sverre succeeded in taking Magnus Erlingsson by surprise, attacking him at Kalvskinnet, near Nidaros. The saga relates that Sverre, before the fight, stirred his men by promising that each of them should be given the rank of the highest nobleman or official whom he could prove that he had killed in the battle. Sverre's victory was complete, and through high skill in leadership he added a new series of victories to this initial success: Ilevollene in 1180, Bergen in 1183 and Fimreite in 1184. In the last battle, which took place between two rather big fleets, Magnus Erlingsson followed the example set by Olav Tryggvason, at Svold: he jumped overboard in order to escape captivity. Sverre, who had proclaimed himself King as early as in 1177, was now recognised all over the country.

Up to the time of the Birchshanks the Norwegian civil wars were nothing but fights between pretenders, and the personalities of the competing aspirants to the throne meant more for their power in gathering men under their various banners than their own political programmes or the economic interests of the different classes. It may seem strange that personal conflicts of this kind for decades could kindle a greater part of the nation. The main explanation is probably that the young Norsemen for centuries had been Vikings. After the Norman conquest of England, however, the great raids to the west were no longer so tempting. But the Viking spirit was still alive. As Sir George Webbe Dasent remarks in the introduction to his admirable translation of Haakon Haakonsson's saga: "Foreign aggression had not been given up in consequence of any decline in the love of fighting for fighting's sake." It is, in my view, fully justified to regard the first four decades of the civil wars as a transfer of the Viking raids from the external to the internal scene of events. The Viking spirit struck inwards.

The Birchshanks, however, represented something new. They were, originally, a crowd of "have-nots," starting a real class struggle. In Norwegian history they appear as the first faction we evidently can tabulate in accordance with the orthodox marxist theory of economic dominance in internal politics. Some of the oldest speeches by Sverre that are known to us from his saga, reveal him, also, as a fervent class propagandist. But Edvard Bull has made it clear that he changed his policy after the battle of Kalvskinnet. Then, for a while Sverre made his most impressive appeals to the local patriotism of the population in the Trondheim districts, the trönders, and many representatives of the old nobility families in that part of the country became his strong supporters. Again, after his final victory at Fimreite, Sverre Magnus, as he now called himself, changed his policy once more: hence he preferred to speak as the King of a united Norway, addressing his loyal subjects in the name of national feelings.

One of his speeches from that later period is of special interest to-day. It was made at Bergen, in 1186, after some riots instigated by visiting German merchants of the Hanse. In this speech, which he is supposed to have dictated to the saga-writer, Abbot Karl Jònsson, he expressed his opinion of the trade visitors of foreign nations. He said: "We wish to thank all Englishmen who have come to us, because they have brought us wheat, wheat flour, honey and cloth; we wish also to thank all those men who have provided us with flax, linen, wax or kettles. We will also mention in friendship our guests from the Orkneys, the Shetlands and Iceland, as well as every one who has brought us goods of which we are in need and can utilise. But the Germans, who have arrived in great numbers and with large ships, carry out of the country butter and cod-fish, thus creating great want, whilst they, in exchange, bring us wine, which people have begun to buy—my own men as well as merchants and ordinary townsmen. The result of these purchases has been much evil and no good. Because of too heavy wine-drinking some have lost their lives and others their limbs; some have been damaged for lifetime, whilst others have been dishonoured, wounded or beaten. I put great blame on those Germans, and if they wish to keep

their lives or goods, they will have to depart immediately, as their visit has been of little benefit to us and our realm." This speech is, in fact, illuminating, not only for Sverre's personal estimation of the traders from various countries, but also for the original medieval view on foreign trade, which was not dominated by money-thinking, but valued exports and imports in relation to a qualitative scale of comparative national utility.

The reforms of Sverre were all intended to strengthen the national kingdom. He established a State bureaucracy, directly responsible to the King. But in doing so he weakened the influence of the old nobility, the "lendmen," and, by appointing many Birchshanks of unknown families to high offices, he democratised political power. The nobility was, however, so weakened after the forty-four years of civil wars that his policy, in principle, was unassailed from that quarter. But the bishops raised a heavy opposition to his intermingling in ecclesiastical affairs, and obtained his excommunication in 1194. A great part of the Norwegian clergy, however, remained faithful to the King. But one of the bishops, Nicolas Arnesson, organised, in 1196, a new party of revolt, called the "Croziermen" (baglerne), and was supported by Pope Innocent III, who threatened to place the whole of Norway under interdict. During this conflict, and shortly after an important military victory over the Croziermen, Sverre died, in 1202.

In his foreign policy Sverre succeeded in an important rounding off of the frontier against Sweden. The district Jemtland had since ancient days been lying like a no-man's-land between the two kingdoms. Sverre placed it under Norwegian sovereignty. He established also a direct administration for the Shetlands, which had earlier been part of the Orkney earldom.

The strong Royal authority created by Sverre presupposed a forceful personality on the throne. During the first fifteen years after Sverre's death no one was able to fill his place. In fact, even the unity of the kingdom was threatened by new civil wars between Birchshanks and Croziermen. According to tradition, the evil spirit of the country was Bishop Nicolas, whom Henrik Ibsen has described to us as the leader of the

"light-defiers." But in 1217 an alleged grandson of Sverre, Haakon Haakonsson, was proclaimed King, and this fearless and energetic ruler put an end to the Croziermen. He had, however, in the years of 1239 and 1240, to defend his throne with arms against the last of the revolting factions, the "Wolfskins," who were led by his own father-in-law, Duke Skule. To begin with, his armies were driven back. But when Skule was killed outside Elgeseter Monastery, on the 24th of May, 1240, the 110 years of Norwegian civil wars had, at last, come to an end.

From Harald Fairhair to Haakon Haakonsson a number of strong personalities filled the Norwegian throne, and each of these prominent Kings worked for a strengthening of the Royal power, whilst not one of the weaker rulers was ever forced to renounce any of their prerogatives. One might, consequently, have expected that the old freedom of the Things had been lost during this long period of increasing monarchical dominance. But nothing of the sort is recorded. The Things were left in possession of their power to legislate and pass final sentences in criminal as well as in litigatory cases. No King dared to infringe the traditional legal rights of free men. The democratic principles of legislation and judicial proceedings were maintained besides the growing executive power of the monarch.

Does this mean that the Kings were disinterested in the enactment of laws and the administration of justice? Not at all. On the contrary, they adopted a consistent and effective policy towards the Things, all the time working for greater conformity of provisions in the different shires and for codification of customary law. But they used the power of persuasion instead of force. In general, they appeared as movers of elaborated proposals. The use of this method proved, however, to be sufficient, and Kings like Halvdan the Black, St. Olav and Magnus the Good were, in consequence, often called "law-givers." Formally, their position in relation to legislation was not wholly unlike that of the Roman praetors, and just as a great many of the explicit rules in Roman law were due to praetorian initiative, perhaps the overwhelming number

of medieval Norwegian law amendments had their origin in Royal proposals. On the whole, the collaboration between the Things and the heads of State seems to have been carried on in a spirit of mutual understanding; although the saga-writers loved to describe conflicts, they have not recorded any serious controversies between the Kings and the legislative assemblies. We have to conclude that both parties must have been motivated by a deep sense of esteem and respect for the sanctity of law. It was certainly a leading idea of the old Norsemen, which found its expression in those words of the old Frostathing-Law: "With law shall land be developed, and not by anarchy disintegrated" (or—as it would read in a literal translation: "With law shall land be built up, and not by unlaw laid waste").

The organisation of Law-Things underwent, however, two changes. In the first instance, a number of men were appointed as a "law-court," with the mandate of preparing the lawsuits for the Thing. Secondly, only a certain number of elected men were allowed to attend the Law-Things. We do not know in which way the elections took place, but it is important to realise that the old Norsemen used a sort of representative system. In the XIIth century, however, the representatives were appointed by the King's officials, although the peasants still seem to have influenced the choice.

At the time of St. Olav there existed only four supreme Things or Law-Things: two near Trondheim, Frostathing and Örething, Gulathing for the western and Eidsivathing for the eastern shires. Örething was, however, later reserved for enactments of constitutional character and proclamations of new accessions to the throne. The so-called Borgarthing, which was established at a much later date, was to begin with only a court, and, as it was always more or less subservient to Eidsivathing, its existence did not bring about any new disunion in the system of laws.

The codification of the Eidsivathing-Law has been lost, but we are in possession of the two other collections. Both of them are rather casuistic, but here and there we find also expressions of general principles. Some examples will be instructive. I take all of them from the Frostathing-Law, which,

in my opinion, is far the better in power of formulation.[1] The leading principle of the whole system is laid down in VII, 1: "It is the King's right to command and to forbid, but he must rule according to law." This provision makes the old Norwegian monarchy constitutional and not absolute. Another provision confers on the Thing a certain right to revolt if the King should commit some particular crime. In the Introduction it is said: "We have tempered the laws with mercy." Freedom of religion is not admitted. II, 4 states explicitly: "The next is this, that every man in the King's dominions must be a Christian." In a State which had just adopted Christianity the provision was most natural. The primary personal rights are laid down in three rules. II, 1 prescribes: "It is Christian law that every child that is born shall be nourished, brought to church and baptised, if it has the head of a human being. Every child has a right to a father." In VI, 1 we read: "The first provision in our law of personal rights is, that every one of our countrymen shall be inviolate in his rights and in his person, both in the kingdom and outside the kingdom." Finally, we have in IV, 5: "It is further enacted, that all free men shall enjoy security in their homes."

A number of provisions regulate the relations between husband and wife. After the marriage the wife continues to be the owner of her own property, but XI, 5 prescribes: "The husband shall have the management of his wife's property as long as they continue in married life and their household remains unbroken, except only such moneys as were set aside at the betrothal or at the nuptial; these the wife shall have in her own control, and be accountable for." This latter part of the wife's property might increase in a most special way, as XI, 13 prescribes that a husband has to pay his wife three marks (of silver) for each act of adultery he commits. The property of unmarried women is supposed to be looked after by their male relatives, but XI, 17 says: "If kinsmen neglect the affairs of the women who are in their care and these find their own

[1] The quotations are given in the translation by Professor Laurence M. Larson, which is good and seems to be most precise. As the old Norse editions of the laws belonging to the British Museum were lost in the blitz, I have, however, not been able to compare the translations with the original text.

maintenance, they shall be allowed to manage their own affairs as they like."

The stratification of society is clarified through a series of detailed rules. Ownership of land was the socially most important economic relation. A free man of free ancestry on both sides possessing allodial land, a "hauld" or "odalsman," appears as belonging, in the legal sense, to the upper class. But he possessed his land as a representative of the family. If he wished to sell, he had to offer it, in the first instance, to his kinsmen. Allodial land sold out of the family could, on certain conditions, be redeemed. Next to the hauld came the ordinary peasant, who might be a freeholder or a tenant farmer. The rent had to be paid in kind. Free labourers were known, as the law laid down rules for wage contracts. The lowest stratum of free citizens consisted of freedmen, who had been manumitted from servitude or whose ancestors had been slaves; only the great grandson of a thrall could enjoy the unqualified rights of a free man. As for the slaves themselves, they enjoyed "freedom from want," but they were only to a very small degree protected by the law. Thus, V, 20 of the Frostathing-Law says: "If a man kills his thrall, he shall report the deed on the same day; he is then held answerable to no one but God; but if he fails to do this, he is a murderer." XI, 20 of the same law prohibits to "sell a thrall or a bondwoman from the land."

In the codifications the execution of sentences was still left to private initiative. Outlawry appears, therefore, as a main punishment in all the laws, but IV, 58 of the Frostathing-Law prescribes: "In three places, in church, at a Thing, and at a merrymaking, all men shall be equally sacred." As a part of the system, detailed rules are laid down for the distinction between legal and foul killing. The rules for allowed killing have sometimes a drastic form. Take, for example, IV, 33 in the Frostathing-Law, reading thus: "If a woman slays a man, his kinsmen have the right to kill her if they wish, provided that she does not leave the land within five days in the summer and half a month in the winter."

Three common duties towards the State were imposed in the old laws upon all citizens: to serve in the "leidang," to partake

in the mending of roads, and to render labour contributions if a church should be built within the district. Appointment to meet at a Law-Thing could not be refused. A negative duty was also imposed upon the people in connection with the Things, as the Frostathing-Law says in I, 3: "Ale shall not be brought to the Thing, either to be sold or otherwise disposed of."

Most of the main rules recorded in this short survey, which has been made, intentionally, just as casuistic as the old laws themselves, were in substance congruous in the three law districts, and it is, on the whole, only fair to say that all medieval Norwegians lived under the same system of law. But, in details, there existed a number of embarrassing differences between the laws of the three supreme Things. It became, therefore, a natural aim for the King to create a new, common law for the whole country; such a work would also open opportunities for bringing all provisions up to date. Edvard Bull believes that the preparations for the new code were put in hand about 1240, but he has not given us his reasons for this assumption. What we know is that the finished work was placed before the Law-Things and adopted by them in the 1270's, during the reign of Haakon Haakonsson's son and successor Magnus, who was later called "the Law-Mender." Thus, that unity of law which in France was not realised until the Great Revolution in the 1790's, was introduced in Norway 520 years earlier.

The "Law of the Land" repeats a great part of the rules laid down in the old laws from Frostathing and Gulathing, only in modernised, more abstract and general formulations, but contains, in addition, some new principles of importance. A few of them are worth mentioning even in this little book.

Firstly, the confused and disputable provisions concerning the succession to the throne which had been included in the Gulathing-Law during the reign of Magnus Erlingsson, were replaced by unambiguous and detailed rules. In principle it had already been agreed upon at a meeting of the Frostathing in 1260 that legitimate sons should have better rights than bastards; the "Law of the Land" referred the eldest illegitimate son of the late king to the seventh place of succession.

Secondly, a number of detailed new rules were laid down for land tenure. We have to conclude that a great part of the free farms had been sold to landlords who represented a typical capitalistic class.

Thirdly, Magnus the Law-Mender introduced a few rules aiming at the rationalisation of agriculture. Far the most important among them was the provision that every year one fourth of the arables should lie fallow. We meet here a form of economic management which is often overlooked in the theoretical discussions: central planning through legislation concerning private as well as public enterprises.

Fourthly, along with the Gulathing-Law and Frostathing-Law, which are completely rural, Magnus the Law-Mender gave equal rank to the regulations of town life and urban production, which for some time had been in existence under the name of "Birch-Isle-Laws" (a name of geographic origin); and he laid down rules for the limits between rural law and Birch-Isle-Law (e.g. X, 32 in the Frostathing-Law).

The old Norse laws are important sources, not only for our knowledge of the legal ideas of the Medieval Norwegians and the social structure of their society, but also for our knowledge of their language. It is, however, a remarkable fact that many modern writers who have expressed their categorical opinions on the national characteristics of the Norwegian language, have, apparently, completely disregarded the old Norse laws, as they have deemed as not national, stylistic expressions, and even words that are common in all the medieval codifications left to us. How can this be? The explanation lies near at hand. Most men find it tedious and trying to read laws. Accordingly, they prefer to treat law texts as non-existing. The said modern authors have found it easier to seek the standard of old Norse in the Icelandic literature of the age. But for three reasons this method may give incomplete or even misleading results. Firstly, Icelandic was, to quote Professor Alf Sommerfelt's Taylorian lecture of 1942, "originally a south-western Norwegian dialect," whilst "the oldest written linguistic standard language originated in Trondheim and shows distinct Trondheim traits." Secondly, the over-

whelming part of extant medieval literature from Iceland consists in sagas; that is to say, it is exclusively epic, and covers, consequently, a most limited stylistic ground. Thirdly, the style of the sagas was just as conventional and artificial as that of the skaldic lays.

Not everyone will immediately discover the artificiality of the saga style, for it is apparently natural and simple. Only, it offers such a hypertrophy of artlessness and simplicity that it must arouse suspicion. A closer examination will also reveal the same recurrence of stylised expressions and conventional clichés as is found in the lays. But all kennings are banned from the sagas. Another difference lies in the fact that the sagas excel in details, whilst the lays concentrate on essentials. But this is only because the lays were composed with the intention of being learnt by heart and remembered in their totality, whilst the sagas were written for readers. In fact, every one of the numerous details in the sagas is told in a style as lapidary as that of the lays.

A saga gives the biography of a well-known man or the traditions of a family. It begins either with a short statement of a remote ancestor, with the birth of the title character or, in the case of a king, with his accession to the throne. The end is generally either the statement of the place where the hero of the narrative is buried or a short description of his exterior, his looks and his peculiarities. Chronology is strictly observed throughout the whole tale. When a subordinate character is mentioned the last time, it is commonly added: "He is now out of the saga." Almost all talks and speeches are recorded in direct oration. But the saga-writers refrained from describing, discussing or analysing the inner development of the characters they produced; action was everything to them. Modern American behaviourists will have to regard the Icelandic sagas of the Middle Ages as the only true literature ever written.

But everyone will have to admit that some of the sagas, within their intentional limitations, reach a high standard of epic art. As the most brilliant of them, the connoisseurs place the Nial Saga. It is full of life, the conflicts are thrilling, and the grand scenes depicted in a masterly way. But it deviates

from the common type of sagas. The unknown author, who must have been a lawyer as well as a historian, has written with clear tendencies. He had two main ideas: the sanctity of law and the moral inferiority of women. In a shrewd way he lets characters and events reveal his own opinions Thus, his Nordic women are selfish and mean; in a most callous way they make men their instruments; they love to see heroes fight and die; but they have, themselves, nothing to give. The bitter wisdom of this misogynist is concentrated in an exclamation by one of his leading characters: "Cold is the advice of women!"

Snorre Sturlason's *Sagas of Norway's Kings*—sometimes called "Heimskringla" from an inversion of their two initial words "Kringla Heimsins" ("The round earth")—have all the lofty qualities of the good family sagas, and possess, in addition, high historical value, because they are built upon a wise man's sifting of written material as well as of verbal tradition. But sometimes the reader is obliged to characterise him with Henrik Ibsen's words about King Carl XV: "The skald in him was too strong." Norwegian historians of the 1920's, Edvard Bull most of all, were inclined to reject all those informations given by Snorre, which they, themselves, possessing a typical mentality of a disillusioned generation, for some reason or other deemed improbable. The opinion of to-day is not so sceptical. Recent examinations of family traditions still alive in Norway, have proved an astounding correctness in the recorded recollections of facts, and when this is so in our newspaper age, there is every reason to believe that the traditions of Snorre's time, which were kept fresh by constant recapitulations, possessed an even much greater reliability. A modern book attaches historic importance even to the only fantastic part of Snorre's work: his tale of Odin and the "Ynglings." Based on his racial investigations, Mr. Coon remarks: "Snorre's rationalisation seems to have been uncannily accurate."

In another class than Heimskringla we have to place the sagas of Sverre and Haakon Haakonsson. They were both written on Royal initiative, Sverre's saga even partly under the King's own supervision. The latter part of Sverre's saga,

and the whole of Haakon Haakonsson's saga, date from a time which lies only a few years after the death of the portrayed kings. Thus, we have here to do with semi-official and almost contemporary history, which we may trust as far as facts are concerned, but which we otherwise have to treat with caution, as the apologetic tendency of the authors is only too obvious.

Both these sagas were written by Icelanders, Sverre's saga by Abbot Karl Jònsson, Haakon Haakonsson's saga by Sturla Tordsson, a nephew of Snorre. Icelanders were also all the later skalds who celebrated the deeds of the Norwegian kings in high-pitched stanzas or, although very seldom, composed oppositional lyrics. The most famous of them belonged to the XIth century: Sigvat Tordsson, Arnor Earl-Skald and Tjodolv Arnorsson. It was a joke in medieval times that poetry had become a national trade of the Icelanders.

It was otherwise in Norway herself. In addition to the laws, few original literary works were created in the motherland. But a great number of British and continental romances found their way to Norwegian readers through more or less free translations, and from a purely linguistic point of view this second-hand literature is of considerable interest, as we here meet an Old Norse which is emancipated from the strict conventional rules of the sagas; it is freer, and more varied in its power of expression.

Only one literary work of interest to posterity was written by a medieval Norseman who was not primarily an Icelander. It is a dialogue between father and son. The title is *The King's Mirror* (Konungs Skuggsjà); the author says that the work "is written in such a way as to furnish information and entertainment, as well as much practical knowledge," and of its use he remarks, none too modestly, that "every King should look frequently into this mirror and observe first his own conduct and next that of the men who are subject to him."

We learn from the mirror about the etiquette of a medieval Norwegian court, which is evidently that of Haakon Haakonsson. This etiquette is strict, without being artificial. The court has an international character; embassies are sent to and received from the leading sovereigns; Latin and French

are spoken. In several chapters the father gives good moral advice. He tells his son to love God above everything else, and "next to him to love righteousness." The three main virtues of a courtier are, in his view, wisdom, eloquence and courtesy. His admonitions have sometimes a most personal touch: "And further, there are certain things which you must beware of and shun like the devil himself; these are drinking, chess, harlots, quarrelling, and throwing dice for stakes."

In the introductory chapters the author discusses geographic and scientific problems. It is noteworthy that he believes in the spherical form of the globe, thus being in opposition to the common belief of his time. He tries to explain the relation between the earth and the sun by comparing the earth with an apple, moved so that it subsequently occupies different positions to a burning candle. He concludes: "From this you may infer that the earth-circle is round like a ball and not equally near the sun at every point."

Who was the author of *The King's Mirror*? He wished himself to be anonymous. Many guesses have been ventured. The late Professor Fredrik Paasche, who recently died from overwork among the Norwegian refugees in Sweden, suggested Archbishop Eystein, but personally I believe Professor Laurence Larson is right, when he, in the introduction to his excellent translation into English, concludes by saying that the author was "a professional churchman who belonged to the anti-clerical faction."

Whilst Iceland, throughout the Middle Ages, dominated Norway in literature, the country of Snorre has left no relic of art which can compare with the architecture and sculpture, created by medieval Norwegian artists on domestic soil. Even in Norway herself only a small number of churches and other edifices, built in the years between 1000 and 1300, have survived until our own times. But they suffice for teaching us the main lines of architectonic development, as well as the high quality of the principal works created during those three centuries.

The oldest churches were small, primitive and heavy. But at an early time, Norwegians must have studied

architecture abroad, as we find churches from the XIth and the first half of the XIIth century, built in correct Romanesque style. Unfortunately the most grandiose of these creations, the Oslo Cathedral, which was finished about 1130, is only known from its ruins. But these reveal the plan: the Cathedral has had three naves and one transept, with a tower in the architectonic centre, and a semi-circular choir. Partly left, but altered through later reconstructions, is the Stavanger Cathedral. We still see, however, the big, round pillars which in stern simplicity dominated the original edifice. Gates and capitals are, on the other hand, richly decorated in Norman style. Also the Nidaros Cathedral, in Trondheim, was, from the outset, planned as a Romanesque church. But shortly after 1150 the design was altered, probably on the initiative of Archbishop Eystein; leaving the altar in its original form, the new architects added both the nave and the transept in lofty Gothic style. As far as we can judge from the remaining parts, as well as from contemporary descriptions, this cathedral must have been one of the most solemn, imposing and inspiring edifices of Christendom. But it was more than once ravaged by fire, and at the beginning of the XIXth century the walls had become so weak that reconstruction was a technical necessity. After protracted controversies concerning the principles of restoration, the rebuilding approached its accomplishment when the German invasion took place in 1940, and, whether or not the cathedral, in its present shape, is historically true, it is anyhow a "thing of beauty," dearly beloved by the whole Norwegian people.

Norwegian medieval sculpture is mostly known from the many preserved statues of the Nidaros church. Most of them belong to later Gothic; they are strangely individualistic in expression, and sometimes grotesque in design.

Of medieval Norwegian cathedrals, that in Kirkwall came next in rank to the archbishop-church of Nidaros. It was founded by Earl Ragnvald, in 1137, in memory of his uncle, Earl Magnus, who had been assassinated in 1115, and afterwards was made the patron saint of the Orkneys; the remains both of Ragnvald and Magnus were found in the cathedral in 1926. The edifice has received some additions, but the old

totality remains: a stately cruciform red-sandstone structure in Romanesque, with touches of early Gothic, not unlike the so-called Durham-style.

On the whole, the Norwegian stone churches from the Middle Ages represent a combination of national and British design. Wholly national, on the other hand, is the special style of Norwegian wooden churches from those centuries. The exterior rises with roof over roof, the highest one covering the belfry, which is no real tower, but a vertical extension of the architectonic centre; along the walls runs an outer corridor with free openings instead of windows. These edifices represent a fusion of Norwegian house style and Gothic verticalism. Their strangest features are, however, that they adopted the ornaments of the heathen wood-carvings, and particularly the gaping dragon's prows, in the same forms as they were used on the Viking ships. Thus, such churches embrace, in a way, heathendom as well as Christianity, and symbolise the twofold origin of Norwegian medieval sentiments.

During Haakon Haakonsson's reign Icelandic literature, as well as Norwegian art, reached a peak, and because Iceland, between the years 1255 and 1263, was brought under the sovereignty of the mother-land, both these expressions of flourishing culture were regarded as manifestations of true national spirit. Simultaneously, the country enjoyed economic prosperity and also, after 1240, internal peace. Internationally, Norway's position was more highly appreciated than ever before. Matrimonial connections were established with a number of Royal houses. The coronation of the King in 1247 was effected by Cardinal William of Sabina as a special Papal envoy; the eight days' festivals surpassed everything previously seen in the north. Foreign powers sued for alliances with Norway, and King Haakon was mentioned as a candidate for the dignity of Roman Emperor. The people began to dream of Norway as a future Great Power.

But even before the death of King Haakon himself, a heavy blow hit the country. In 1263 a Norwegian fleet, under his personal command, sailed to the western isles of the common-

wealth in order to reassure and consolidate the sovereignty over the outlands, perhaps even with a hidden plan of conquering Scotland. After having received some reinforcements from the Isle of Man, "King Haakon had more than 120 ships, most of them great, and all in good trim, both as to men and weapons," the saga says.

But during a heavy Atlantic storm, on the 1st and 2nd of October, this mighty armada was driven within arrow shot of the shore, and when a detachment landed at Largs in order to save some stranded ships, it was attacked by superior Scotch forces, headed, according to the saga, by five hundred knights with mail-clad horses. Although the Norwegians managed to hold their ground, the battle of Largs must be regarded as a serious Norwegian defeat, because both the army and the storm-beaten navy suffered so much that King Haakon had to abandon his proud plans. He took up winter quarters in Kirkwall, and died there, in the Bishop's Palace, just after the midnight of the 15th of December. The peace treaty was concluded in Perth on the 2nd of July, 1266. Norway ceded the Hebrides and the Isle of Man to the King of Scots, although against a yearly tribute of 100 mark sterling, to be paid "eternally."

Haakon Haakonsson's unhappy war with Scotland initiated a long series of Norwegian defeats and misfortunes.

The regency which governed the country for two years after the death of Magnus the Law-Mender, in 1280, involved the country in a serious and fruitless conflict with the Church. During the subsequent reign of Eric Magnusson, Norway was thrown into several wars, or warlike enterprises; shipping and trade suffered severely, and the international position of the country weakened. Motivated by fear of Hanseatic expansion, Alv Erlingsson of Thornberg, the mightiest Norwegian nobleman of his time, equipped a half-private fleet, and tried to intercept the German trade on Norway, but although he acted with the silent approval of the court, he was disavowed by the King, who, under foreign pressure, sought Swedish mediation and, in 1285, agreed to pay a remuneration of 6,000 mark silver mint at a rate of 33 per cent to the Germans. Dynastic controversies led to a

war with Denmark from 1289 to 1295; nothing resulted from it.

Eric hoped, however, through a dynastic Norse-Scottish policy, to regain his country's recent losses in international position. He had been married to a Scottish princess, and his only child by her, little Princess Margaret, was, after the death of King Alexander III, the only legal heir to the throne of Scotland. On the proposal of King Edward I of England commissioners of the three countries met in the summer of 1290, at Birgham-on-Tweed, and recognised Margaret as Queen of Scotland; although she was only seven years of age, they arranged her future marriage with the son of the English King, Prince Edward. An alliance between England, Scotland and Norway seemed within range. But little Margaret, the "Maid of Norway" as the Scots called her, was never to see her kingdom. On her way to Scotland she died that same autumn in the Orkneys. The immediate result was a Scottish civil war between two pretenders. Edward I found the opportunity tempting, and proclaimed himself Lord Paramount of Scotland. The Scots, however, made an alliance with France in order to defend their independence, and although Norway and England had maintained friendly relations with each other for more than two centuries, King Eric sided with the anti-English alliance. In the summer of 1295 a treaty of Paris was concluded between France and Norway, in which Norway promised to support France with 100 big ships, 200 galleys and 50,000 men; in return she should receive 30,000 pounds sterling; 6,000 mark were paid in advance, and used for the settlement of the debt to the Hanse. Happily, the quick English victory in Scotland stopped the plans of the French aggression, for King Eric would not have been able to fulfil his obligations under the treaty, and an actual war against England might have proved disastrous.

But King Eric's brother and successor, Haakon V, engaged his country in warlike enterprises in the north, first against Denmark, later against Sweden. Peace was not concluded until 1310; dynastic intermarriage sealed it. Soon after, some shipping incidents led to a conflict with England; this time

again open war was eluded, but friendly connections had not been re-established when Haakon V died, in 1319, after a reign of twenty years.

King Haakon did not leave any son. His successor was the Swedish son of a Norwegian princess. As a consequence the two countries became united, and not until 1814 was Norway to regain a position worthy of her past—for 495 years she had to live as a prostrated and neglected partner of Nordic unions. Only a weakened and despairing country can ever suffer such a fate.

Why did this long disaster befall the people of the Norwegian Commonwealth? What was the reason for the sudden decay of medieval Norway? This question constitutes the most serious problem of Norwegian history.

VIII

THE DECAY OF MEDIEVAL NORWAY

SEVERAL contesting theories have been launched in order to reveal the "real cause" of the Norwegian decay that commenced about the year 1300. It may be expedient to classify them in two groups: exogenous theories, trying to explain the decline from events outside the structure and policy of the kingdom, and endogenous theories, which present the downfall as the inevitable result of structural conditions or changes in the Norse society or as a sort of causal punishment for political errors and mistakes.

For chronological reasons it will be expedient to treat the endogenous theories first.

The best known of them was launched by Johan Ernst Sars, the great Whig historian of Norway. He outlined it in a speech, made on the 9th of March, 1866, and explained it fully in a great historico-philosophical treatise, *Outlook on Norwegian History*, completed in 1891. His idea was to find a common cause of the decline in the XIVth and the revival in the XIXth century. From French historians he had learnt the "historical law" that social forms which at one time are suitable and progressive, in a later period may become inexpedient, or even disastrous. Sars tried to apply this "law" to Norwegian history. He described the old Norse society as dominated by aristocratic families which were the bearers of the people's culture and character. But so mighty was this aristocracy that the Kings, in their fight for national unity, had to break it down, and when, in 1319, the male line of the Royal House became extinct with the result that the country eventually was united with other Nordic kingdoms, no leaders were left to fight against foreign influence. Norway had to suffer for centuries because she had been transformed to a democratic country. But at last, in the XIXth century, the time of democracy had come, and Norway got her chance.

This theory was created by a great romantic, and it possesses all the charm of romanticism. It is also greatly admired by all those who, in historical theories, search more for simplification and aesthetic beauty than for completeness and truth. A closer examination will, however, reveal a conspicuous one-sidedness in the argumentation.

To begin with, the earls, the lendmen and the rest of the nobility were not so much bearers of Norwegian nationality as of the Viking spirit. Ever since the end of the Viking raids, they had represented an obsolete and dangerous element within the State; the civil wars give sufficient proofs for this statement. The real bearers of national culture and character were the Things, these democratic assemblies of free men; the rich flourishing of Old Norse culture in Iceland, where the Althing represented the supreme power, reveals the intimate connection between that culture and democratic institutions, embodying the spirit of liberty. And, in fact, as long as the Things preserved their old position, creative initiative was alive within the Norwegian people. But after the great codification of Magnus the Law-Mender, the Things seem to have lost what was left of their legislative power, and Haakon V dealt a hard blow against them by transferring their decisions in great criminal cases to the King's Council as the final court of appeal.

Secondly, the anti-aristocracy policy of the Kings was a more complicated affair than generally realised. Most adherents to the theory of Ernst Sars have assumed that King Sverre crushed the power of the lendmen. But, as stressed by Edvard Bull, King Sverre changed his policy after the battle of Kalvskinnet, and noblemen of the old families played a great part in Norwegian public life throughout the XIIIth and the first decades of the XIVth century. The addition by Sverre and his successors of new, vital families to the aristocracy should have strengthened this class instead of weakening it, and the official introduction, by Magnus the Law-Mender, in 1277, of the knighthood system, was a further step in the same direction. But a serious blow against Norwegian aristocracy was struck by that same autocrat, Haakon V, who also enervated the judicial power of the

Things. He dictated alone, and without any man's advice, on the 17th of June, 1308, a law-amendment which reserved the title of earl for members of the Royal family and the ruler of the Orkneys, whilst it abolished the title of lendman. Moreover, he recalled all estates that had been given to members of the aristocracy by the King, and his "new letters" contained considerable reductions. But the old families still formed a nobility, and the arbitrary procedure of Haakon V aroused their spirit of opposition. Dissatisfied aristocrats generally deliver excellent raw material for conspiracy and revolt, and as the King, after 1319, resided mostly in Sweden, the malcontents among the noblemen had every inducement to start a national movement, as their own interests and emotions coincided with those of the whole people. The anti-aristocratic policy of Haakon V had, in reality, not prevented a national rise of the aristocrats, but, on the contrary, produced a firm basis for such a policy. It was also launched. During the three first decades of the union with Sweden, Norse noblemen headed a firm resistance against foreign influence, and did everything to break the union with Sweden. In 1338 they even made open rebellion; in 1340 they forced the King—Magnus Smeik—to appoint a Norwegian Government for home rule; in 1343 they pressed him to declare the personal union between the two countries dissolved, and proclaim his younger son as King Haakon VI of Norway, whilst his elder son, Eric, was elected as heir-apparent to the Swedish throne; they understood also in a most effective way how to withhold all Norwegian support when Sweden was involved in an aggressive war against Russia. All such national endeavours were, however, discontinued after 1350, and when Haakon VI, thanks to the premature death of his elder brother, in 1362, was elected King also of Sweden, thus re-establishing the union, the Norwegian noblemen did not protest. But as their position in the meantime had remained unchanged, the cessation of their national activities must be due to causes outside the sphere embraced by the schematic theory of Ernst Sars.

Thirdly, the decrease in power of Norwegian aristocracy after 1308 was not at all identical with or even related to,

any democratising of Norwegian society. On the contrary, the economic development of Norway in the XIIIth and the beginning of the XIVth century, was most undemocratic. In those years the export trade flourished: Norwegian dried fish, cod-liver oil, timber, staves, furs and falcons were sold at high prices in foreign markets. The young noblemen, who carried on this trade, used their profits for purchases of estates. At the same time the Church invested most of her growing wealth in real property. As a result, the number of freeholders decreased rapidly. Norway experienced, indeed, in those early days, the same development as that which broke down the yeomen class of England in the XVIIIth century. In spite of the lendmen, the old Norwegian society was, in the economic sense, a strong democracy, because such a great part of the rural population consisted of freeholders. A growing number of "odalsmen" was now replaced by tenants.

In England, however, the disappearance of the strong yeomen class broke down neither economic nor political democracy. Why did the parallel phenomenon in the XIIIth century in Norway prove to be so much more disastrous?

This question leads us straight to the second of the endogenous theories, which I launched myself in 1916, ascribing the decline mainly to the structural one-sidedness of the medieval Norwegian population, which was almost entirely rural.

Before the year 1000 Skiringssal stood out as the sole city of the country. It is true that there also existed some market-places, "kaupangs" as they were called, and in the XIth century several of them developed into towns, and received Royal privileges as such: Tunsberg, Sarpsborg, Oslo, Trondheim, Bergen and Stavanger. But none of them housed any considerable urban population, and they did not perform many urban functions. Edvard Bull even ventured the statement that they were nothing but "church-towns,"—centres for religious worship and ecclesiastical administration. This contention involves, however, a big exaggeration, as the towns naturally continued to be market-places,—market and temple or church were, all over the world, the two focuses of ancient cities. But the all-embracing Norwegian peasant type

performed himself many functions which, in other countries, were left to the citizens of organised towns: he was a producer of iron, weapons and implements; shipbuilder and seafarer; artisan; export merchant and importer. Consequently, old Norway did not feel the want of more important cities, and it was only too difficult for the townsmen to find sufficient regular employment. It is characteristic that the Norwegian guilds, which were partly established even before the introduction of Christianity, and received Royal privileges from Olav Kyrre, throughout the Middle Ages continued as sociable brotherhoods without developing into corporations for urban production and self-government.

The primitiveness of the medieval Norwegian towns did not represent any national danger in the early days of the commonwealth. But about the time of Haakon Haakonsson conditions in other countries had altered. Medieval societies experienced a period when unions of strong cities dominated shipping and international trade. Handicraft reached a state of refinement and perfection which required skilled work by well-educated and highly-specialised artisans. New and stronger types of ships were developed. The products of Norwegian peasants could no longer satisfy the wants of the times. Norway lagged behind.

So much was medieval Norway a rural country that it did not possess any official capital until 1286. The Vestfold kings resided on their estates in the county of Borre, and Harald Fairhair on his estate at Karmsund; most of the later kings had an ambulatory court and bodyguard, moving from estate to estate in order to utilise the production of their belongings. According to tradition, Trondheim was, at least for a time, the real capital. It is, also, quite true that this town, under the ecclesiastical name of Nidaros, since 1151, when Norway was made an archbishopric of its own, was the official centre of the Norwegian Church. But the kings continued their journeys. Then, in 1286, Haakon V made Oslo the capital, and built Akershus castle and fortress to protect it. The removal of the King's residence to Sweden, in 1319, did, therefore, only break a short tradition of thirty-three years.

In four ways did the non-existence in Norway of important medieval towns, in my opinion, endanger the political as well as the economic independence of the country. Firstly, no strong urban population, with traditions and national privileges, were prepared to withstand the well-organised German infiltration of Norwegian foreign trade, which at about the middle of the XIIIth century was instigated by the Hanseatic League. Secondly, the lack of money-making urban production and trade, embarrassed taxation to an ever-increasing degree, and from the time of Haakon Haakonsson the Norwegian finances became more and more dependent on foreign loans, a dependence which, in those days of embryonal capitalism, was much more dangerous than later on. Thirdly, when the governmental seat, in 1319, was transferred to Sweden, no towns were strong enough to act as spiritual centres for continuous national resistance, and no urban population could foster a new, national democracy; this is the reason why the decline of the freeholders proved so much more fatal to Norway in the XIIIth than to England in the XVIIIth century. Fourthly, the peasant-built ships of the 1280's could not match the town-built types of the Hanseatic navy, a fact which was sufficiently proved by Alv Erlingsson's unhappy naval engagements with the Germans.

But had there been any possibility of creating strong Norwegian towns in the XIIIth century?

There are many indications in the affirmative. Foreign trade flourished, but was, to an ever-increasing degree, carried on by foreigners. Some Norwegian shipowners and shipbrokers established themselves in the towns, but most of the national trade was in the hands of young noblemen, who used their profits for buying estates instead of reinvesting in shipping and commerce. Bergen was a growing staple town—the English historian, Matthew of Paris, counted, in 1248, more than 200 ships in the harbour—but a greater part of the labourers and functionaries trading in Bergen consisted of German immigrants who founded a colony of their own, acting for centuries as a commercial fifth column.

On this point my own theory coincides with a more exogenous interpretation of the XIIIth century events, which

attributes the downfall to a Hanseatic commercial conquest of Norway.

As an explanation of the German success, this theory, which has recently been supported by Johan Schreiner, generally refers to Norway's growing dependence on Baltic cereals. It has been contended that the Norwegian Kings conferred privileges to the Hanse in order to obtain sufficient import of grain. But Dr. Arnold Raestad, who, in the 1920's, examined the Norwegian commercial treaties of the XIIth and XIIIth centuries, came to another conclusion. This is what he writes: "A circumstance which favoured the endeavours (of the Hanse) was the chronic financial embarrassment of the Kings, beginning during the later part of Haakon Haakonsson's reign and increasing during his successors'. The required loans were, for a time, raised among southern French and Italian financiers in England, but these loans had to be negotiated through the English Government which, itself regularly in need of money, did not take any special interest in furthering the Norwegian loan operations on the English market. Outstanding claims in Scotland, and the French loan rendered on the basis of the treaty of 1295, could not be of any help in the long run. The rich (German) commercial towns were the self-appointed lenders, because they were directly interested in rendering loans—against compensation in privileges. Thus the greater part of privileges, renewals of privileges and extension of privileges which the (German) commercial towns obtained from the middle of the XIIIth to the end of the XVth century, possess a distinct financial background." The first of these treaties were concluded with Greifswald in 1262, Lübeck in 1278 and Bremen in 1279. A treaty of 1343 recognises the Hanseatic Office, in Bergen, as an official institution; the later treaties of 1361 and 1376 favoured the Germans still more.

The reasons for the German success are thus disputed. But all Norwegian historians agree on the disastrous effects of the privileges rendered to the Hanse. They are, in particular, clarified through the interesting treatise on: *The Downfall of Norse Power*, which, in the 1920's, was published by Professor Oscar Albert Johnsen.

In the first instance, the favoured Hanseatic League forced national shipping and trade to concentrate on the connections with England, and Professor Alexander Bugge has, through a detailed examination of English rolls of custom, proved that Norwegian ships, even in the first years of the XIVth century, in great numbers visited harbours like Lynn, Kingston-upon-Hull and Ravensere. But the conflict with England, that started in 1310, apparently put an end to this connection, which was most profitable to both parties. Here, again, Norway had to suffer from the policy of Haakon V.

The contention of Norway's dependency on Baltic grain, rests partly on the first of the two dominant exogenous theories, which sees the deepest cause of the downfall in a deterioration of climate. Originally the idea was put forward by Edvard Bull just before the outbreak of the First World War. He intended to explain it, in detail, in the third volume of *The Life and History of the Norwegian People*, but he died while he was still carrying out his preparatory investigations. Other research workers have, however, found little evidence to support his theory. As bad harvests in northern countries bring great misfortunes on the people, they would probably have been recorded even in rather illiterate times. The silence of the sources is, therefore, a strong argument against Edvard Bull.

Icelandic annals, on the other hand, contain reports of several bad harvests in the XIVth century, all due to severe and cold weather. But Professor Hasund, who was an expert in agricultural history, most emphatically denies that these records show any proof of a climatic change, as failures of crops often occurred also in the XIIIth century, when Iceland experienced her happiest and most prosperous days. He adds that the Icelanders, even in our own times, have to be prepared for a certain percentage of scarce years, and that agricultural uncertainty has probably been the dark side of Icelandic economy ever since the first settling. If the Icelandic statements of bad harvests in the XIVth century thus do not prove a deterioration of climatic conditions at that time in Iceland herself, they can prove it still less for Norway. It is quite another thing that Icelandic nature was very hard on

the inhabitants during the XIVth century, as they suffered extensive damage from the eruptions of the volcano Hekla in 1300, 1339, 1341 and 1362.

Greenland has also been mentioned in connection with the theory of climatic deterioration. This is most natural, as the economic and cultural decline of the Norwegian commonwealth was nowhere more complete than in the remote and arctic Greenland settlements, and here ice and snow are more powerful forces than in any of the other old outlands. But Fridtjof Nansen, who undoubtedly was the greatest authority of all time on arctic problems, disposes of the suggestion in a most categorical way. This is what he writes: "The causes of this decline were many. That it was due to changes in climate, as some have thought, is not the case. The ancient descriptions of the voyage thither and of the drift-ice, show exactly the same conditions as now."

Among the "many" causes of the decline which Nansen reveals in his analysis, one deserves special attention. Between 1247 and 1261 Greenland voluntarily became subject to the Norwegian crown, whilst before it had been a free State like Iceland. In 1294, trade with the tributary countries of Norway, Greenland among them, was declared a Royal monopoly. The result was that only the King's ships were permitted to sail to Greenland for the purpose of trade. From a commercial point of view this traffic was most profitable, as the Norsemen in Greenland paid with valuable goods, which were sold at high prices, and secured a considerable surplus in money. Nevertheless, the bureaucracy of Haakon V, and his successors, did not find it opportune to equip more than one ship for the Greenland voyages, and this one vessel—*Knarren* was her name—did not even sail every year. On the contrary, there occurred intervals of nine and even nineteen years. Apparently, the bureaucrats found it embarrassing to devote thoughts to something so far away. After 1410 *Knarren* ceased to sail. Greenland is a whole continent. But the bureaucrats of the XVth century forgot it. They are probably holders of the world's record in forgetfulness.

What did happen to the Norwegian settlers in Greenland? We do not know. When, in the 1720's, the country was again

colonised by Norwegians, no trace was found of them. They were extinct, and no relics have told their tragic history. Fridtjof Nansen has tried to reconstruct it on a scientific basis. Without iron and timber they were unable to build ships themselves. Consequently, they were thrown upon the resources of the country. But no grain can grow in Greenland, and to the healthy nourishment of a white man cereals are necessary; a prolonged diet of meat and fat will reduce his vital force, and, not least, his power of reproduction. The forgotten Norsemen in Greenland must at last have degenerated, and either died out or lost their national and racial identity through intermarriage with the Eskimos, who with such diet represent the stronger vitality.

Had connections with Norway been kept up, on the other hand, there is every reason to believe that the Norsemen in Greenland would have survived, maybe. even prospered. Thus, the State monopoly of overseas trade, this golden dream of so many faithful bureaucrats, resulted, in relation to XIVth century Greenland, in the extermination of a whole population.

To Iceland, also, the monopoly was a misfortune of tragic dimensions, although some licensed traffic, which was added to the State shipping, kept up almost continuous commercial connections.

All in all, the climate theory does not seem to hold good. Much more is to be said in favour of the second exogenous theory, which tries to explain Norway's downfall chiefly as a result of the "Black Death."

This terrible plague was carried to Bergen, in the early autumn of 1349, upon a ship arriving from England. In no time the infection spread all over the town. The mortality was extremely high even during the first weeks. Icelandic annals tell us that in one day eighty corpses were brought to one of the churches; among them the bodies of fourteen priests and six deacons. In September the plague reached Nidaros; here the archbishop and the whole of the clergy died, save one brother. From the cities the plague went inland. In the country districts it seems to have ravaged still worse. On the Agder coast seven parishes were left com-

pletely depopulated. Icelandic chronicles report that after the plague less than one-third of the people were alive. New pestilences followed. In 1359 and 1360 the country was infested with smallpox, in 1371 with an epidemic of unknown character. After this, the last of the three big scourges, there were left in the bishopric of Nidaros only forty old priests out of 300, whilst the number of Norwegian knights had sunk from 270 to sixty.

Most Norwegian historians of the XIXth century have assumed that the "Black Death" was a deadly blow against medieval Norway. Modern historians, on the other hand, generally think that the importance of the plague has been exaggerated. They stress that other countries also suffered seriously from the "Black Death," but without any such lasting effects. This objection is, however, completely superficial. Just as a disease may break down some persons for a lifetime whilst others recover speedily, a plague may bring about the downfall of one people whilst others soon regain their former force. All depends on the actual vulnerability of the persons, as also the countries, that are hit. And Norway of the XIVth century was most vulnerable. The country was certainly under-populated in relation to its natural resources, the population was scattered, the cities small, and the upper classes decimated by wars and weakened by the policy of Haakon V. All economic data register a catastrophic retrogression. Thus, the official rolls tell us that the rents of land sank, on an average, to about thirty per cent of their former value; in some districts they went down to about five per cent.

Our discussion will have made it clear that the decay of medieval Norway does not present us with one uniform problem, but with two separate questions, relating to different periods. The first one is this: Why was the brilliant period between 1240 and 1263 followed by a slow, but uninterrupted, decline in power and prosperity? The second one may be formulated in the following way: Why did the Norwegians, after 1350, acquiesce in the union to which the country had become a victim, although its ill-fated consequences were

obvious even to the unobservant? These two questions are certainly related to each other, but they are by no means identical.

My own theory of 1916 relates chiefly to the first question. I still hold that it explains the real structural weakness of XIIIth century Norway. The peasant-built Norwegian vessels could no longer compete, either in the navy or the commercial fleet, with the bigger and better new types of Hanseatic ships; the towns were not big and enterprising enough to produce a national class of organised tradesmen and artisans, sufficiently educated and trained for matching the Germans, the result being that our only important commercial city, Bergen, became a Hanseatic colony; the lack of national money-making activities undermined the finances; no centres existed for national art and literature. And only flourishing towns could have produced an adequate economic basis for such foreign policy in grand style as was initiated with Haakon Haakonsson's expedition to the west, and unhappily continued until 1319.

On this point my theory needs a completion: besides the structural causes of the decay, the unwise leadership of Magnus the Law-Mender's successors contributed considerably to the national misfortune. We have, in particular, to reproach Haakon V for short-sightedness and obstinacy. Strange to say, most historians regard him as a clever King. The explanation is that he certainly was most alert. But his constant unrequired activity gives him rather the rank of a "busybody" than of a wise ruler. To his credit can, in fact, only be counted the construction of the two fortresses, Akershus and Vardöhus; through the latter establishment Norway's frontier towards the Russians was, for the first time, efficiently marked. But his foreign policy destroyed our good relations with England, which were fundamental to our foreign trade, allowed the Hanseatic League a growing influence, and involved Norway in dynastic infiltrations with the other Nordic countries, infiltrations which initiated 586 years of unions. He knew that the crown, at his death, would leave the country. Nevertheless he worked systematically for centralising all political power in the hands of the King

and his inexperienced bureaucracy. For such sins history should have no forgiveness.

The second question is easy to answer, once it is isolated: The "Black Death" hit the country at an unfortunate moment. Just when a new national policy had been initiated it bereft Norway of her future leaders and diminished her resources to such a degree that the people despaired. The plague-stricken Norwegian nation became an easy booty of foreign ambition.

IX

495 YEARS IN THE SHADE

WHEN Haakon VI was proclaimed King of Norway in 1343 no one could have foreseen the later development. During his nonage a Norwegian Regency governed the country, and the young King was educated as a Norwegian. After he had come of age he kept a Council of distinguished noblemen and tried, in co-operation with this institution, to rule in accordance with Norwegian interests. But after his election as King of Sweden, in 1362, the troubled and turbulent conditions in his eastern realm claimed more and more of his attention, and after his marriage to the Danish Princess Margaret, in 1363, his interests were even more drawn away from Norway. He was, also, much influenced by his wife, and Queen Margaret seems very early to have become the soul of a Royal imperialism, not unlike the Hapsburg policy of later centuries. To begin with, she was the power behind the scene. But Haakon VI died in 1380 and his young son and successor, Olav V, only seven years later. Queen Margaret then succeeded in being recognised as regent both in Denmark and Norway; partly through well-conducted military operations and partly through diplomatic skill, she succeeded in winning the power in Sweden also.

The Norsemen were, however, much against a female ruler. But whilst the XIIth and XIIIth centuries had produced a surprisingly great number of pretenders, no Norwegian could now boast of a sufficiently near Royal descent. According to the law, the minor Prince Eric of Pomerania was the legal heir to the throne. In 1388 the Norwegian Council, still maintaining its position, published a declaration to that effect. Queen Margaret then found it wise to fetch Eric to her court and adopt him; in 1389 he was proclaimed King of Norway. The Council now took the government into their hands, hoping that King Eric, when he came of age, would rule the country as a separate kingdom. But Queen Margaret thwarted the Norwegian plans. In 1395 she induced the

Danish noblemen to accept Eric as King, and in 1396 she achieved the parallel result in Sweden. To seal the union which she had thus secured she called an inter-Nordic meeting at Kalmar, in 1397; here a committee of seventeen was elected with the mandate of drafting a convention between the three Nordic countries concerning their rule by a common king; seven Swedes, six Danes and only four Norwegians were members. But the final agreement was only signed by the seven Swedes and three of the Danes. The traditional expression "the union of Kalmar" is, therefore, a historical forgery.

But the existence of a common King for all three countries was, nevertheless, a fact; the union had been established even before the Kalmar meeting, and Queen Margaret did everything to make it efficient.

To Norway the new conditions proved to be a great misfortune. Queen Margaret and King Eric both resided in Denmark, and greedy Danes were given high positions in the Norwegian administration. After Queen Margaret's death, in particular, the situation deteriorated. But Eric was a bad ruler in his other countries, too, and in 1439 the Danish Council sacked him; soon after the Swedes followed the example. Both countries elected as new King another German, Christopher of Bavaria, a nephew of King Eric. To begin with, the Norwegian Council would not adopt the same attitude; they regarded Norway as a hereditary monarchy, and King Eric as irremovable. If, therefore, King Eric had chosen to appear in Norway, he would undoubtedly have been able to maintain the Norwegian crown. But he had not been in his northern country since 1405 and he felt himself a German; he preferred to live as a pirate, and established himself in Gottland, where he won renown as a first-class buccaneer. Deserted, in this shameless way, by their legal monarch, the Norwegians at last submitted to pressure from the other Nordic countries, and in 1442 Christopher of Bavaria was accepted as Norwegian king. But he died as early as new-year 1448, leaving no children, the problem of succession thus becoming actual once more.

This time the Swedish and Danish Council did not come

to an agreement. The Swedes elected a national leader, Karl Knutsson, whilst the choice of the Danes again fell on a German prince, Count Christian of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst. A national party in Norway was in favour of bestowing the Royal dignity on Sigurd Jonsson, who presided over the Council. But he refused, apparently because he was a legitimist, and could not boast of being, himself, a descendant of any one among the former kings. The result was a civil war between pro-Swedes and pro-Danes. Both Christian and Karl were proclaimed Kings of Norway. The pro-Danes represented, however, the more energetic faction, and on the 29th of August, 1450, they concluded, on behalf of their country, a treaty with Denmark, stipulating an "eternal union" between the two countries, on the basis of a complete formal equality. Concerning the succession, the rule was laid down that the Councils of both countries should meet in Halmstad and elect the new King among the legitimate sons of the deceased ruler. The treaty thus ignored the Norwegian "Law of the Land," which prescribed a hereditary monarchy.

The civil war between the Pro-Danes and the Pro-Swedes of Norway was decided outside the frontiers of the realm. After battles between Swedish and Danish armies, in which King Karl lost some ground, he was expelled by a revolt in Stockholm, and in 1457 a Swedish representative assembly, a "Riksdag," elected Christian of Oldenburg King of Sweden. Karl Knutsson was twice called back and reinstated, but after 1457 the Pro-Swedes in Norway found it impossible to protest against the union with Denmark.

King Christian had inherited from his predecessors on the Norwegian throne a claim against Scotland, because the tribute for the Isle of Man and the Hebrides had not been paid since 1426. He opened negotiations in order to obtain payment, but the strange result was a treaty of 1468, in which King Christian, on behalf of Norway, solemnly renounced all sovereignty rights over the Hebrides and the Isle of Man, whilst he pledged the Orkneys as well as the Shetlands for the promised dowry of his daughter, Margaret, who became betrothed to King James III of Scotland; as he never paid that dowry and probably never had any intention to pay it, this

treaty robbed Norway of these old and important outlands. It is not known whether King Christian concluded the treaty of 1468 in order to demonstrate to posterity his unique stupidity, or because he had taken a sickly dislike to his only too loyal Norwegian subjects.

When, after Christian's death in 1481, his son Hans was elected King in Norway as well as in Denmark, the Norwegian Council pressed him to promise that he would restore the sovereignty of the western isles. But King Hans did not take any action to keep this promise. His word was, on the whole, worth very little. In 1497 he succeeded, however, in winning also Sweden, but in Sweden, as well as in Norway, armed revolts soon broke out. The Norwegian rebels were commanded by a descendant of the old nobility, Knut Alvsson, but when this fearless leader, after having received a letter of safe-conduct, as negotiator came on board a Danish warship in Oslo harbour on the 18th of August, 1502, he was stabbed at the order of the Danish commander-in-chief, Henrik Krummedike. Another riot, instigated by a peasant leader, Herlog Hudfat, in 1508, did not achieve any result at all; Herlog himself fell in the fight; his head was exhibited on a stake outside Akershus Castle.

The repression of Herlog Hudfat's revolt took place under the personal leadership of Duke Christian, the eldest son of King Hans. After his accession to the three thrones in 1513 as Christian II, this gifted but vehement ruler time and again used hard methods. In Sweden the result was a successful rebellion, led by Gustavus Vasa, and in Denmark his dethronement by the Council. The Norwegian Council, which was now presided over by the Archbishop, Olav Engelbriktsson, accepted the new Danish King, Frederick I, an uncle of Christian II, but forced him to sign a charter in which the old rights of Norway as an independent kingdom were repeated and confirmed. The King renounced his power to impose taxes without the advice of his Norwegian Council, and bound himself not to appoint Danes as Royal officials in Norway if they were not married to Norwegian wives. Although Frederick I was known as a Lutheran, he had also to promise not to allow any one to preach in

Norway "against our Holy Father the Pope and the Roman Church."

But the Lutheran on the throne broke his charter, and the archbishop began to prepare for an armed conflict: he built the castle and fortress of Steinvikholm, in the fjord outside the Stjör Valley. What he needed was a pretender: a man of the Church, he could not proclaim himself King. But Christian II was still alive and alert. Archbishop Olav invited him to Norway. On the 6th of November, 1531, the King landed in the country with 1,200 men. But Danish commanders, with Danish troops, held all the strong fortresses: Akershus, Bohus, and Bergenshus. King Christian began a siege of Akershus. In the meantime, however, Frederick I had concluded a treaty of mutual assistance with Lübeck, and on the 7th of May, 1532, a Danish-German fleet appeared before Oslo. Christian's strategic position was strong, but his old courage had left him, and he dared not give battle. Forgetting the fate of Knut Alvsson, he opened negotiations with the Danes. An agreement was reached, but the Danes used the first opportunity to break their holy oaths; they trapped King Christian, and in a life-long imprisonment he had to pay, not for the sins of his youth, but for the guileless stupidity of his manhood.

To Archbishop Olav the disappearance of Christian II from the scene of history was a terrible blow. But, soon after, new chances opened up. On the 10th of April, 1533, Frederick I suddenly died, and internal struggles broke out in Denmark. They lasted for three years. History has denoted this civil war as the "feud of the Count," because one of the military commanders bore that title. But in reality the conflict was a pure class struggle—citizens of the commercial towns, the "burghers," and peasants being on one side, nobility and officers, with hired German troops, on the other. In 1534 the nobility conferred the Royal dignity on Christian of Holsten, the eldest son of Frederick I. But the Norwegians refused to pay him homage. To Archbishop Olav it would have seemed a natural policy to join the Danish democracy and try to support the burghers of Copenhagen with military force. But the old leidang had decayed, the archbishop could

not afford the money to hire professional soldiers from abroad, and residing as far north as Trondheim, he found difficulties in obtaining the necessary Danish contacts. He had, therefore, to take isolated action, and he waited too long before he made up his mind.

In the meantime he sued for international support. Unlike Knut Alvsson, he could not expect any help from Sweden, because Gustavus Vasa had adopted Lutheranism and acted in concert with Christian III. Besides, Archbishop Olav did not wish to break the union with Denmark in order to enter a union with Sweden. His aim was to re-establish the national Kingdom of Norway. Under such circumstances he found it wise to approach Charles V, the Roman Emperor and King of Spain. In letters between Emperor and archbishop a new candidate for the Norwegian throne was launched: the unborn son of Christian II's daughter, Dorothea, by Count Friedrich of Pfalz.

On the 23rd of November, 1535, the archbishop received personal letters from the Emperor as well as from the Count; support for a reinstatement of the national kingdom was promised. At Christmas time he acted. During a conference in Trondheim he had leading fifth-columnists arrested. On the 7th of January, 1536, the Frostathing confirmed the imprisonments. The archbishop now appealed to the people, trying to raise an army. But he had, up to then, neglected all propaganda among peasants and burghers; it is no wonder that his urgent appeal in the eleventh hour did not obtain sufficient immediate response from the scattered population. Only weak national detachments could be sent against the fortresses of Bergenhus and Akershus, which were held by professional soldiers under Danish command. The fortune of arms decided against the archbishop's men. Both enterprises had to be abandoned after unhappy initial fights.

Still worse was the fate of the democratic armies in Denmark. Copenhagen was besieged and starved into surrender; on August the 6th, 1536, Christian III made his entry into the capital. He convoked a diet of noblemen, and on the 30th of October a new Royal charter was signed by the King and the leaders of the nobility. Article III contains these ominous

words: "And because the realm of Norway has now to such an extent decreased in power and prosperity that it cannot any more support a lord and King . . , it shall hence not exist as a kingdom of its own, but in all eternity be a part of Denmark, under the Danish crown."

Strange to say, even Norwegian historians have attached some constitutional importance to this arrogant article. There is no reason to do so. The article was, in itself, completely null and void when the document got its signatures, and it remained so ever after. On that 30th of October Christian III was not King of Norway, and had no legal claim to the Norwegian throne. Danish noblemen, without any relation to Norway, were the other party of the contract. No Norwegian ever signed it, or recognised it. Christian III and his successors made no effort whatsoever to have it accepted or acknowledged by any Norwegian authority. It was not notified to foreign powers. It had just as much legal significance to Norway as if it had been a clause in a contract between a wine-merchant in London and the King of Portugal. The Norwegian people were completely in their rights when they continued to look upon that old Norway of theirs as a kingdom of its own after 1536, just as they had done for more than half a millennium before.

To Archbishop Olav, however, Article III sounded like a trumpet of doom, and he did not possess sufficient strength to render any stiff resistance. Thus, the promised effective support from the great continental empire failed to appear; only four warships, sent by the regent of the Netherlands, Princess Mary, arrived at a late moment. After a short and unsuccessful campaign of defence, the archbishop found it wise to use those ships for flight. On the 13th of April, 1537, he put to sea from Sogn, pursued by the Danes. He died in Brabant, on the 6th of February, 1538.

It is a noteworthy and significant fact that an archbishop of the Catholic Church acted as the last defender of the medieval national Kingdom of Norway. For that national spirit of the Norwegian Church which was created by St. Olav never died away, although history, since the time of Bishop Nicolas, had to record long feuds between Clergy and King. Even to

the great mass of the people, national feeling and religious belief had become a unity: Norway was "St. Olav's country." During the long years of decay, religious songs and hagiologic legends had taken the place of skaldic lays and historical sagas. Everyone, whether he was pious and good or ruthless and evil, believed in God and Christ; the whole nation looked up to the Roman Church as the highest spiritual authority and moral instructor. There is no doubt that the Norsemen in the XVth and the early decades of the XVIth century were a religious and very Catholic people.

When Christian III, immediately after the defeat of Archbishop Olav, introduced Lutheranism into Norway by decree, the result was a suppression of Norwegian belief and culture, as well as an undermining of Norwegian national feelings. A great moral decline followed the change in religion. The new clergymen did not win any respect. Many of them were slain, and few of them listened to. Lawlessness and immorality flourished. In many parts of the country crime was no longer looked upon as sin, but as brave behaviour. Manslayers became popular heroes. Rough and uncouth talk found its way into homes and festivals. But pious people continued to make pilgrimages to the holy churches of the Catholic times, reading their customary prayers in cautious whispers.

The introduction of Lutheranism dealt a hard blow against the Norwegian language also. Even before 1536 the linguistic development of Norway had deviated from the stern grammaticalness of Old Norse, moving in the direction of freer forms. The difficult "th" was on its way to be dropped. Swedish and Danish loan-words were being adopted to a growing extent. The dialectic differences between east and west became more marked. To have elucidated this evolution is the merit of Professor Didrik Arup Seip, the present Rector of the Oslo University, one of the most eminent defenders of Norwegian culture against German barbarism, and a victim of the concentration camps. Until 1536, however, every change in the language had been of national origin, and the knowledge of the Old Norse was kept up by the use of the "Law of the Land" in the Things. Now the Bible and the psalm-books were spread in Danish only; from the pulpits

Danish clergymen preached in the Danish tongue; the ecclesiastical registers and rolls "danified" even family names and place names. Thus, a most unnatural duality was introduced: the national language dissolved itself into spoken dialects without written literature, whilst the written literature tried to copy a foreign idiom.

All in all, the decades subsequent to 1536 represent a most serious national debasement and degradation—politically, morally and culturally. But it was during those dark decades that there began an upward movement in production and trade, adding new strength to the economic power of the people, and laying foundations for forthcoming periods of prosperity.

Norway had, since time immemorial, exported some products of her forests, mostly timber. But the chief demand in foreign markets was for batten and planks. It did not pay very well, however, to produce board in Norway, particularly not in the years following the "Black Death," when wages were high. But in the 1520's the water-driven sawing-machines, the "water-saws," were introduced. Such machines are simple and cheap. To install them was everyman's job. Now Norway is the country of rivulets and brooks. In a short time water-saws were erected all along the coast. Each year, foreign ships arrived at Norwegian ports to fetch this new and welcome addition to the supply of wooden materials. Besides the old "kaupangs," new small towns cropped up; they were called "loading-places," as ships were allowed only to take in, but not to discharge, cargoes in those harbours.

To begin with, the King wished to secure all exported products of the water-saws for Denmark. Accordingly, he prohibited export of such materials to other countries. But in 1564 this prohibition was abolished, to the great benefit of the new industry. Now, Norwegian shipping also, found new opportunities, and experienced its first real recovery since its decay in the second decade of the XIVth century.

The declining power of the Hanseatic League made it possible for Norwegian shipowners to engage themselves in the export of sawn goods without fear of disloyal competition. Even the fish export passed successively into Norwegian hands.

On the sea, the Dutch were now the greatest competitors. But they never succeeded in winning commercial bridgeheads on the Norwegian coast, as the Hanse had done in the XIIIth century, and were, accordingly, not so dangerous.

Besides the production of wooden materials, two other old economic activities in Norway experienced, during the XVIth century, a revival on a new technical basis. In the 1540's a number of ironworks were built; whilst the iron blast of the peasants utilised the iron contents in swamps and marshes, the new industry worked deposits of oxidized minerals, occurring in relatively pure state in scattered places in the south-eastern part of the country. Norwegian fisheries were revolutionised towards the end of the XVIth century through the introduction of the long line equipped with more than 3,000 hooks; during the first decade of the XVIIth century this instrument became common along the shore, and contributed to a big increase in the output. Even before the adoption of this new technique, however, the fisheries had enjoyed good times, thanks to rising prices and sufficient influx of fish.

The growing wealth of Norway aroused, successively, the attention and interest of the Kings in Copenhagen. But to Christian III and his successor, Frederick II (1559–88), Norway was still a matter of small concern. Thus, only few and inefficient measures had been taken to prepare Norway for the septennial war against Sweden (1563–70), and the country suffered heavily. In 1564 the Swedes even succeeded in capturing Trondheim by surprise; they carried away the coffin of St. Olav, and used his cathedral as a stable, encroachments which kindled a national hatred against them all over Norway. But Trondheim was soon retaken, and Swedish attacks on Akershus were repulsed. The subsequent peace treaty left Norway unimpaired.

Christian IV (1588–1648) was the first of the Oldenburg Kings to realise the importance of his northern realm. He visited Norway about thirty times, listened to the complaints of her neglected inhabitants, and made serious efforts to look after her affairs.

During the first years of his reign, the Finmark problem caused him much trouble. In some vast and thinly-populated

districts of the most northerly part of the peninsula the Swedish King and the Russian czar had taxed the population in competition with the King of Norway. But through the peace of Teusina, in 1595, the czar promised the Swedish King not to interfere with his "right of taxation" west of a line from Österbotn to Varanger, and it soon became obvious that the Swedes were planning an infiltration even of coast districts which had always been regarded as exclusively Norwegian. Thus, the Swedish King Carl IX conferred upon the citizens of his newly-founded town Gothenburg privileges to fish in Norwegian waters along the coast of Finmark. A firm desire to stop this Swedish policy of expansion was one of the main motives for that declaration of war against Sweden which Christian IV issued in 1611.

Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, Carl IX died; his young son and successor, Gustavus Adolphus, was immediately declared of age. It is well known to everybody that this Swedish King, later in life, on battle-fields in Germany, won renown as a great general, but it is almost forgotten that his armies fought unsuccessfully against Norwegians and Danes in his first campaign, the so-called "Kalmar war" from 1611 to 1613. In the peace treaty of Knaeröd, he had to renounce to the crown of Norway all his contended rights on the basis of the Teusina peace, and all rights of taxation between Tysfjord and Varanger. Sweden's march towards the Arctic Ocean had been checked, and was never resumed.

An episode during the Kalmar war won a high place in Norwegian history of the XVIIth century. In August, 1612, a detachment of Scottish mercenaries landed near Aandalsnes, the same place where the British expeditionary forces in 1940 established their first stronghold. The Scots intended to cross the valleys in order to join Gustavus Adolphus. But the peasants of the Gudbrand's valley came together, partly equipped with weapons of medieval types, trapped the enemy in the defile of Kringen, near Otta, and killed nearly all the invaders. One of the Scottish captains bore the name of George Sinclair, and the enterprise of the mercenaries is known in Norway under the traditional name of the "Sinclair raid."

To young Christian IV the Kalmar war must have appeared as a proud opening of a great military career. But his later campaigns were disastrous. When he intervened in the Thirty Years' War on the side of the Protestants, he was severely beaten by the Imperial army, under Tilly, at Lutter-am-Barenberge, in Brunswick (August, 1626), and had to conclude peace in 1629 without obtaining a single achievement. Then, on the 12th of December, 1643, the Swedish field-marshal Lennart Thorstensen suddenly invaded Holsten, "without any preceding warning, with unheard-of quickness and cunning," as King Christian himself phrased it. By the end of January, 1644, the whole peninsula of Jutland was in Swedish possession. The Danish-Norwegian fleet, under the King's personal command, saved Denmark from a complete collapse, but in the peace of Brömse Bridge, on the 13th of August, 1645, Denmark had to cede the isles of Gottland and Öland, Norway her two eastern districts, the Herje Valley and Jemtland.

The Norwegians considered the peace of Brömse Bridge as a great national injustice, for their forces had been victorious throughout the war. This was chiefly due to Hannibal Sehested, the son-in-law of the King, and viceroy of Norway since 1642. He had organised a new Norwegian army based on conscription, called in 272 officers from the Netherlands, raised a national navy and strengthened the fortresses. During the "Hannibal campaign," as the Norwegian part of the war is called, he successfully defended Norway from attack, invaded Sweden four times, and won an engagement at Nysaker in 1644.

But the concessions of the Brömse Bridge peace were not to be the last territorial losses which Norway had to suffer as a consequence of Danish defeats. Christian IV's successor, Frederick III (1648–70), waged an unhappy war of revenge against Sweden in 1657; on the 26th of February, 1658, he was forced to sign the peace of Roskilde, and by this tragic treaty he had to cede not only the Danish provinces Halland, Skaane and Blekinge, on the Scandinavian peninsula, as well as the island Bornholm, but also the Norwegian province Bohuslen and all the Trondheim shires; Norway was thus severed into two disunited parts. This was in spite of the fact

that the Norwegian army had again been victorious, defended the frontier and even reconquered the Herje Valley as well as Jemtland.

Happily, the Swedes were not satisfied with the peace of Roskilde. Already, on the 7th of August, 1658, they attacked Denmark and Norway anew. But fortune did not favour them any longer. In vain they tried to take Copenhagen by storm. In vain they tried to invade southern Norway; here they were repulsed at the frontier by the commandant of the loading-place Halden, Colonel Tönne Huitfeldt. In vain they tried to defend the Trondheim shires, which were retaken by a Norwegian army under General Reichwein. Even the Great Powers turned against them, fearing a Swedish domination of the North. An international mediation was supported by a fleet of forty English and forty-four Dutch war-ships. Under such circumstances the Swedes accepted a peace proposal which Hannibal Sehested had drafted. The treaty of Copenhagen, signed on the 27th of May, 1660, gave Bornholm back to Denmark, and the Trondheim shires to Norway. Since that time the Norwegian-Swedish frontier has remained unaltered; it is now more than 280 years old.

Frederick III made the most of the popularity which he had won through the victorious war: he induced the representatives of the Danish Estates to confer absolute power upon him, and to transform both his kingdoms into hereditary monarchies; to Norway, however, the change did not mean very much.

The peace of 1660 did not mark the end of inter-Nordic hostilities. Within the next sixty years Denmark and Norway fought their two hardest wars against Sweden. But in both cases the campaigns in the north were only local parts of giant continental conflicts, and on both occasions Norwegians and Danes were up against ambitious aggressors: from 1675 to 1679 Louis XIV, and from 1709 to 1718 Carl XII. A common feature of these two wars is, also, the great part played by naval operations. As the Danish war-ships were manned partly by Norwegian sailors, Norway's participation in the struggle was of much higher importance on these two occasions than ever before.

King Christian V (1670–99) joined, in 1674, the continental alliance against Louis XIV. His partners were Emperor Leopold, the Netherlands and Spain. Sweden had chosen the French side. The primary task before Christian V was, therefore, to keep Sweden in check. Hostilities were opened in the autumn of 1675. On all fronts Danes and Norwegians took the initiative, and succeeded in keeping it. The united Danish-Norwegian fleet, under Niels Juel, won the great battle of Kjöge Bay (1st of July, 1677). Danish armies conquered parts of Skaane. The Norwegians, under the superior command of an illegitimate son of Frederick III, the viceroy Ulrik Frederick Gyldenlöve, invaded southern Sweden, won the engagements of Kvistrum Bridge, Uddevalla and Venersborg in 1676, stormed in 1677 the Swedish stronghold Marstrand, with the fortress Karlsten, and inflicted a serious defeat on a superior Swedish army in the battle of Uddevalla on the 29th of August. Although the Danes, in the later phase of the war, suffered some reverses, they kept the upper hand, and the Norwegians remained unbeaten throughout the campaign. If, therefore, the peace treaty had been based on the outcome of warfare, Norway and Denmark would certainly have regained the provinces lost in 1658. But Christian V was a bad diplomatist. He continued the war after the collapse of the great anti-French alliance. The Netherlands accepted peace in July, 1678, Spain in September, and the Emperor in January, 1679, whilst Christian V still fought on until August. Then he had to accept the dictate of Louis XIV, and could only thank God that nothing worse was claimed from him than a *status quo*.

The Danish-Norwegian participation in the "Great Northern War" took place during the reign of Frederick IV (1699–1730). Like his predecessor, this new Oldenburg King was a mediocre diplomat. He entered the war twice—the first time too early, the second time too late. When he attacked Carl XII the first time, in the summer of 1700, the planned alliance against Sweden had not yet come into play, and after some months he accepted the peace of Traventhal, confirming the *status quo*; the short campaign did not affect Norway at all. After this incident Frederick IV waited

and waited, eight whole years, while Carl XII fought against Russians and Poles, being far away from his country with all his well trained soldiers; and Frederick did not re-enter the war until he had received the news of Carl's serious defeat at Poltava, in July, 1709. But then the Norwegian pulpit orator, Peder Jespersen, coined the slogan "now or never," an "eternal" alliance with Russia against Sweden was concluded, and the attack started. The Danish generals, however, were no masters of the "blitz," and although they captured a big Swedish army in Gottorp, they had not yet struck any hard blow against Sweden herself when Carl XII, at Christmas time, 1715, came home to his country.

Carl XII now conceived the idea of conquering Norway. In 1716 his armies crossed the Norwegian frontier. But his siege of Akershus was fruitless. He then turned to the east in order to seize the frontier fortress, Frederikssten, which had been constructed on the high cliffs near Halden. On the night of the 4th of July the Swedes stormed the town in order to make it the base of a final assault against the fortress. But on the initiative of the two brothers Colbjörnsen, the burghers themselves set fire to the town, and the Swedes had to retreat under heavy bombardment from the cliffs. In our national anthem Björnson alludes to this event in lines which now sound strangely up-to-date:

> Rather did they scorch their country
> Than they would give in.

Carl XII hoped, however, that a big convoy, escorted by war-ships, would bring him necessary war implements for the continuance of the siege. But the Norwegian naval commander Peter Wessel, who had just been knighted under the name of Tordenskiold ("Thundershield"), spotted the convoy in the narrow inlet Dynekilen, entered bravely with his squadron, and succeeded, after a heavy fight, in seizing the whole of it. On receiving this news, Carl XII immediately raised the siege and withdrew to Sweden.

But in 1718 he returned. A northerly army, under General Armfeldt, marched against Trondheim. The main body of

Swedish troops, under the king's own command, attacked Fredrikssten. In man-power they completely outnumbered the Norwegians. But on the 11th of December, King Carl was killed in one of the trenches outside Fredrikssten; according to Swedish tradition the bullet which hit him was fired by a traitor belonging to his own forces. The King's death gave the signal of retreat to both his armies. General Armfeldt marched homewards across the mountains of the Ty Valley. Here the Swedes were surprised by snowstorms and frost. When the pursuing Norwegians spotted them, thousands of soldiers were found, silently sitting in their bivouacs, frozen to death.

In the summer of 1719 the Norwegian army invaded Bohuslen. Tordenskiold resumed the Viking tactics, and took the fortress Marstrand by a brilliant amphibious operation. But Frederick IV received only ineffective assistance from his allies, and found it wise, on the 3rd of July, 1720, to conclude the peace of Fredriksborg. Denmark won some advantages, but Norway did not get back her lost provinces. Once again, her interests were sacrified at the peace conference. Even to the inhabitants of the former Norse territories this omission was unjust, for during the Norwegian invasions they had openly supported their old countrymen, thus proving, by action, that they were still Norwegians in their hearts.

Although Danish weakness and bad diplomacy deprived Norway of the fruits she ought to have reaped from her victories, her comparative position in the north improved through the big wars in the 1670's and the beginning of the XVIIIth century. She had now an army of her own, modern fortresses and war-ships for coastal defence. Moreover, she had suffered less through pillage and looting than both Denmark and Sweden. Norwegian self-respect had also grown. A man like Tordenskiold may even have nourished plans of reviving the old national kingdom; but unfortunately he was killed in a duel as early as in November, 1720.

At the beginning of the XVIIIth century the Norwegian people had, also, a stronger economic position than at any time since 1319, mostly because that upward and progressive

movement in production and trade which was initiated in the 1530's, continued almost uninterrupted until 1720.

In the 1620's a new, important feature had been added to the economic life of the country: in 1623 silver was found near Kongsberg, and in 1632 copper in the Öster Valley. A number of mining works were successively established. Two of them, Kongsberg Silver Work and Röros Copper Work, gave rich contributions to the wealth of the country, although the yield, naturally, varied from year to year. Other mining enterprises, on the other hand, produced more disappointment than metal.

The discoveries of the hidden riches in the mountains were greeted by the whole people as a blessing from God. But when the new mines required labour, the Norwegians refused to respond. The peasant population were accustomed to the discipline imposed upon them by nature herself, but they disliked taking strict orders from mineralogists, or superintendents of mines. Besides, they feared and hated labour underground. As a consequence, not only experts but even common labourers had to be imported from older mining countries. The majority of them immigrated from Saxony. But during the XVIIIth century young Norwegian peasants began to overcome the national complexes, and the country obtained successively a national stock of mining labourers.

Mining is a capitalistic production. It requires considerable starting capital. In the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries the crown was the greatest capitalist. From Christian IV onwards the Danish-Norwegian Kings loved, also, to participate in the financing of metal works in Norway. But they found it necessary to appeal to private support. They even encouraged a considerable import of liquid foreign capital for the purpose of the mines. Formally, the mining enterprises were, therefore, constructed as shareholders' companies or "partnerships," as such organisations were called in those days. Thus, modern capitalism made its entry into Norway through the mining business of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries.

Even before the establishment of the XVIIth century mines, a Royal decree had declared all metallic finds in Norway to

be the property of the crown. The working of mines needed, therefore, Royal concession. Such concessions were given in detailed contracts which generally conferred upon the partnerships a number of privileges, among them often carefully delimited local monopolies on production and sale of specified metals. To most of the works were also given the rights to claim from the peasants within a certain circumference delivery, at fixed prices, of wooden materials for fuel. In return, the partnerships had to accept a number of liabilities. They had to bind themselves to start the working of the mines within a short time, they had to pay a fee on the output, and to observe strict technical rules. The concessions also contained effective provisions for the protection of labour. In our own times, the legend has been launched that such protection was unknown in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. This legend is wholly unfounded.

If we classify the mining policy of the Danish-Norwegian Kings by the help of theoretical terminology, it has to be characterised as "mercantilistic." Some efforts were also made to create a complete Norwegian industry along mercantilistic lines. But they did not meet with sufficient success.

The most concentrated attempt was that in the last decades of the XVIIth century, when Jörgen thor Möhlen received an appointment as "commercial director of Norway" with far-reaching powers. He erected several factories in Bergen: a ropery, soap-manufactory, fish-oil refinery, salt-work, nailery, textile factory and a powder-mill. But partly because the new establishments were created in a hurry, thor Möhlen found it difficult to sell his products. In 1695 he was, then, at his own request, authorised to issue currency notes, redeemable in legal coin or commercial drafts. As these notes began their circulation only one year after the establishment of the Bank of England, they deserve to be mentioned in universal monetary history. But the notes of thor Möhlen suffered a tragic fate. People had no confidence in them, and as soon as any one had received such a note he presented it for redemption. The revenue officers of the King were just as pressing as any private creditors. Accordingly, the notes

did not serve their purpose: namely to secure a delay of payment for the infant factories; and the whole business went bankrupt. Thus, Norway anticipated the bad experiences of that unhappy instigator of experiments, John Law.

Mercantilistic policy, as directed from Copenhagen, succeeded during the XVIIIth century in realising the so-called "modern" ideal of bureaucracy in our own times: economic planning for the whole society was centralised in the governmental offices. As a result the interests of Norway were constantly sacrificed in order to promote Danish desires, for centralised economy means, through geographical necessity, discrimination in favour of those people who live near to the govermental offices. That mercantilistic measure which proved to be most hurtful to Norway, was a decree of the 16th September, 1735, which reserved grain import to southern Norway for Danish exporters. Although the prohibition against Norwegian purchase of cereals outside Denmark had to be suspended after the bad harvests in the 1740's and 1770's, it represented a constant danger to Norwegian economy; great variation in prices occurred frequently, and the grain market in Norway was sometimes exploited in a ruthless way. Most embarrassing were, also, two other Danish trade monopolies: it was reserved for Danish companies to trade with Finmark as well as with Greenland, which, in the 1720's, again had been colonised from Norway, thanks to the initiative of the clergyman Hans Egede.

How was it possible for the Danes, throughout this long span of time, to keep Norway in such an economic subjugation?

In the first centuries after the "Black Death," the enormous reduction in the Norwegian population offers the main explanation. It is probable that the whole of Norway, including the provinces subsequently lost, as late as about 1500 had less than 250,000 inhabitants; in 1665 the population was about 440,000 and in 1720 perhaps 100,000 more.

But then a sharp rise occurred. According to the first census, which was held in 1769, Norway had then 724,000 civilians, and about 4,000 military. If, to that number, we add the populations of Iceland and the Faroes with 46,000 and 4,750

respectively, we reach 775,000 civilians for Greater Norway against 786,000 for Denmark proper—that means, practically, equality. The census of 1801, which is most reliable because the name of each individual was registered, shows a further improvement in favour of Norway. On February 1st that year, the Norwegian population amounted to 883,353, Iceland had 47,240 inhabitants, and the Faroes 5,265, giving a grand total for Norway with her dependencies of 935,858 against 925,680 for Denmark. The population of the duchies Slesvig and Holsten, which were still united with Denmark, shows, according to a census of the 13th December, 1801, a figure of 602,087. In the so-called "whole-State" the Norwegian element represented thus only about 38 per cent, but as the Danes could not count upon effective support from the two duchies in case of a conflict with the Norwegians, Norway was no longer inferior in population to the dominating country of the union. Other factors must, therefore, account for her prostrated position even at the beginning of the XIXth century.

To historians of the Marxist school it would seem necessary, or at least natural, to prove some economic causes of predominant effect. But the upward movement in Norwegian production and trade which was initiated in the 1530's, had continued with increasing speed, only interrupted by short and unimportant periods of conjectural depressions. In the XVIIth century, the rivers had been taken in use for floating the timber from the high valleys down to the saw-mills at the export harbours or near to them, and during the XVIIIth century production for export of wooden materials developed into a most profitable capitalistic business. Norwegian iron, glass, delf and cobalt blue were sold in the world's market at preferential prices. The fish export was prosperous. Coinage could be based on home production. The commercial marine, which in the XVIth century was still insignificant, grew into an economic force. In 1776 Norwegian owners possessed 546 ships, with a tonnage of 24,300 lasts; and in 1783, at the end of the North-American war, 844 ships, with a tonnage of 46,500 lasts, manned by 7,153 sailors. In 1801 the number of ships had risen to 915 and the tonnage to 53,300 lasts; more

than 10,000 seamen were employed. All in all, as early as about the year 1800 Norwegian economy had won a many-sided aspect, which made it more varied and less vulnerable than that of Denmark.

But even if an oppressed population is sufficiently great and well-equipped for winning her independence, the old status is bound to remain if no leaders can be found for a movement of liberation. In Norway there existed a decided want of national leadership throughout the period from 1536 to the first decade of the XIXth century, when a sudden and most remarkable change has to be recorded.

The old nobility had suffered heavily from the "Black Death" and the subsequent epidemics. The few remaining families of high standing soon adopted a disastrous practice of intermarriage; decrease in fecundity and other forms of degeneration were the natural consequences. At the beginning of the XVIIth century only the nobility of Bohuslen was still vigorous and robust. But Bohuslen was ceded to Sweden in 1658. Apart from Tordenskiold, all well-known officials ennobled after 1536 were of Danish origin. It has to be admitted that a number of them married Norwegian heiresses and stayed in the country. But it needed, in general, more than one generation to produce Norsemen in this way, and not until the beginning of the XIXth century did a Norwegian leader emerge from such a family. Then, in the years between 1807 and 1840, we find in the foremost ranks of Norwegian life a representative of the very highest of those families: Count Herman Wedel Jarlsberg.

During the Middle Ages the "haulders," or "odalsmen," formed a class of their own, and they continued to do so. But their influence on public life was connected with the Things, and since the days of Magnus the Law-Mender the importance of those venerable institutions was ever decreasing. In 1604 Christian IV published a so-called "translation" into Danish of the "Law of the Land;" it contained misunderstandings and falsifications. From that year the odalsmen lost their former influence on the jurisdiction. But it was to be still worse. In 1687 Christian V gave a new Civil Code for Norway; he rejected a well-written proposal from a Norwegian

Commission, and introduced, to a great extent, Danish law. All power at the Things now passed to the professional judges, who were educated in Copenhagen, and did not even understand the legal expressions of the peasants. In 1666 the final decisions in Norwegian law-suits were transferred to the supreme court of Copenhagen, and a new, so-called "Court Tribunal" for Norway, established as a middle instance, was abolished in 1797, together with the old "Law-Things." In the early days, the participation in the deliberations of the Things had kept alive among the odalsmen social thinking, legal understanding and public spirit. Now their national and altruistic interests found no outlet. Their horizon was put into smaller compass. Moreover, clever odalsmen got no chance to be known by their compatriots. A peasant leader found it, therefore, most difficult to raise any flock behind him, and he never acquired any experience in public affairs. In fact, since Herlog Hudfat was killed in 1508, only one peasant succeeded in initiating an oppositional movement: Christian Jensen Lofthus, who, in the 1780's, organised several thousands of peasants and land-labourers in protest against the arbitrary administration of the south-eastern shires. Although he acted with surprising moderation, he came in conflict with the law, was seized and imprisoned; he died, in 1797, after ten years of confinement. But his complaints resulted in some beneficial reforms in the administration.

The proportionate number of odalsmen had, however, declined from the middle of the XIIIth century until the 1660's, and the tenants made up a timorous class. Thanks to big sales of Church estates which had been seized by the State at the introduction of Lutheranism, the freeholders were again increasing in number from the 1660's onwards. But the greater part of the Church estates was bought by capitalists from the towns, who established themselves as landlords, deriving their yearly income from rents. Economically and socially the "proprietors," as they called themselves, played a considerable part down to about the 1880's, but politically they belonged to the impotent groups.

Only the towns could have been centres of national resistance against the Government of Copenhagen. But that same

lack of power to build and develop towns, which, in my view, was the main defect of the medieval Norsemen, prevented even their descendants in the long years from 1536 to the 1770's from creating focuses of national culture and political life. About 1500 the total urban population in Norway was probably between 12,000 and 15,000; in the 1660's it is calculated to have been about 30,000; the census of 1769 showed 69,000. Thus, the townsmen continued to make up a small group within the Norwegian society. They were, also, scattered in a most unhappy way. Bergen, the most important commercial city, was, as late as about 1600, half German; and Oslo, the former capital, to which Christian IV, in honour of himself, gave the new and strange name "Christiania," had but a few thousand inhabitants—as late as in 1801 only 8,931. None of them was populous and strong enough to compete with Copenhagen.

Sverre Steen, who, in four volumes of *The Life and History of the Norwegian People*, has given a most interesting and reliable description of conditions in Norway between 1500 and 1814, stresses the unhappy consequences to our country of Copenhagen's predominance. He writes: "In Denmark–Norway there existed one city of European standing: Copenhagen. It gathered within its boundaries the best and most beautiful things which the realms possessed, just as the capitals in other civilised countries. In Copenhagen resided King and Court, the Government offices and the Supreme Court. Here was the great naval base of the monarchy. In this town and its surroundings magnificent palaces were built, even in times of depression. . . . Here were the libraries, the museums and the common archives of the kingdom. Here resided the university, the only spiritual centre, and the high school for the education of all senior officials. Copenhagen was, also, the aim of every ambitious man who wished to make his career. Norway possessed no such town. Norway had no economic centre, no political centre, no cultural centre." Every one of these words speaks for the truth of my structural theory, that Norway's decay had a main cause in want of urban centres. It should be added that the high tariffs on import during mercantilistic times were stipulated

with the chief purpose of protecting the industries of Copenhagen, and were felt by Norwegian industrialists and tradesmen as detrimental to their interests.

The want of cultural centres is, in all probability, also the main cause for the deplorable fact that the Norwegians, from the end of the XIIIth to the beginning of the XVIIIth century, in literature and art produced nothing but folk-lore and folk-music, and it is significant that the revival came with two typical representatives of urban culture: Ludvig Holberg and Johan Herman Wessel.

Ludvig Holberg was born in Bergen, where he spent his childhood. He studied at foreign universities, and received lasting impressions from a sojourn in England. At a comparatively young age he was appointed professor at the university of Copenhagen; his main discipline was history, and we possess excellent historical textbooks from his hand. But he won Nordic immortality through his comedies from the 1720's. Their scene is Copenhagen. Most of his characters belong to the burgher class. Some of them are standardised types; he underlined this peculiarity by calling all his manservants Henrich and all his maid-servants Pernille. But in spite of this preference for typifying, he created living, self-revealing human beings; many of them still survive on the scene. Almost all the comedies are satirical and topical; Holberg's weapons are wit and humour; his laughter may be merciless, but it is more often spontaneous and hearty. He lets everyone speak for himself; only, in the fifth act he sometimes uses one of the characters as a mouthpiece for his own, most moral and excellent opinions; such an act could receive the headline "The Professor Unmasked."

Johan Herman Wessel was a writer of satirical poems. His wit is as deep and sharp as that of Holberg. But he was no prolific author. Everything he has left us is published in one thin volume. But his puns, proverbs and curious statements are as up-to-date to-day as they were when he formulated them in the 1770's.

Wessel belonged to the "Norwegian Society" in Copenhagen, which was founded in 1772 by Ove Gierlöw Meyer, and soon became one of the focuses for Norwegian propa-

ganda. The other focus was the society life of the well-to-do citizens of Christiania, which in the years between 1770 and 1812 had its most brilliant festival period, with balls and banquets, private comedies and chamber music, garden parties and cavalcades, occasional lyrics and after-dinner eloquence in a somewhat buoyant and bombastic style.

This little ambitious capital, without any official prerogatives, tried to be a contrast to Copenhagen. Whilst Copenhagen was pro-German, Christiania was pro-English. In Copenhagen the foreign languages were German and French, in Christiania English and French. The modes of the Danish were partly German, partly French; in Christiania all modes were English; fashionable patricians of Christiania used London tailors; the leading personality of society life, Bernt Anker, even had his shirts and collars washed and starched in a London laundry. The officials of Copenhagen borrowed their wisdom from German mercantilists; the business men of Christiania were fervent admirers of Adam Smith and had, for the benefit of wider circles, his *Wealth of Nations* translated two years after its first publication.

The political programme of the Norwegians in Christiania was national and liberal. A separate bank and a separate university for Norway were their primary national claims; freedom of the Press and free trade were the leading principles for which they fought in the economic sphere. Their national claims were rejected. But their liberalism fell in with an oppositional movement in Copenhagen and scored several successes: private trade with Iceland was opened from the 1st of January, 1788, and with Finmark from the 1st of June, 1789; in both cases the Government had to admit the failure of the State monopolies. And on the 1st of February, 1797, was published a new tariff which realised many of the liberal ideals; all prohibitions on import were abolished; so were five out of twelve prohibitions on export; all tariff rates were reduced, and some raw materials allowed free import. The Danish-Norwegian tariff of 1797 was, indeed, more liberalistic than all other tariff laws then in existence. Christiania could, with pride, record the fact that the author of the new tariff was the Norwegian lawyer Christian Colbjörnsen.

Against the foreign policy of Copenhagen no Norwegian opposition was raised during the XVIIIth century, as the Cabinet, which was the real leader of the whole administration during the reigns of Christian VI (1730–46), Frederick V (1746–66), and Christian VII (1766–1808), acted in the coinciding interests of both countries. Friendship with Russia was maintained, no new wars against Sweden were waged, and the participation in the so-called First Armed Neutrality, from 1780 to 1783, did not lead to any rupture with Great Britain. Also the adherence to the Second Armed Neutrality in 1800 tried to further Norwegian as well as Danish interests; the object of this alliance between Russia, Sweden, Prussia and Denmark-Norway was to exempt from visit and search neutral merchantmen under convoy. The British Government, however, regarded the alliance as a threat to her blockade policy, and sent a big fleet to the Baltic waters; commanders were Parker and Nelson. On the 1st of April, 1801, Nelson sailed, through a shrewd and unexpected manœuvre, into the King's Deep, at Copenhagen; after hard fighting, he destroyed a great part of the Danish-Norwegian fleet. The Norwegians, being anxious to preserve good relations with Great Britain, felt this incident as a warning, and from 1801 onwards Norwegian spokesmen time and again claimed a more pro-British policy than that favoured by the Cabinet of Copenhagen. Thus, from the very beginning of the XIXth century the national movement in Norway had its own programme in foreign politics.

In 1807, after the peace of Tilsit, the depth of the difference between Danish and Norwegian interests was revealed. Napoleon had succeeded in uniting the continent against Great Britain, and claimed that Denmark-Norway should join his "Continental Blockade" of the British Isles. Crown Prince Frederick, at that time the actual leader of the Cabinet, desired to maintain an absolute neutrality. But if he had to choose? Norway's trade and welfare was dependent on the open sea; a war against Great Britain would be ruinous to her; further, the Norwegian people did not partake in the general admiration of Napoleon, and had all their sympathies with the British. Denmark, on the other hand, lay open to French

attack from the continent; in a war against Napoleon, Holsten, Slesvig and Jutland would be overrun and lost in no time; further, the Danes were, at least partly, admirers of the Emperor. Nevertheless, Crown Prince Frederick seems, at the early stages of the conflict, to have been inclined to accept the Norwegian view. But his behaviour was irresolute and wavering, and the British Government feared that he would yield to French pressure and deliver the remaining Danish-Norwegian fleet into Napoleon's hands. Consequently, London ordered a new attack on Copenhagen. From the 2nd to the 5th of September, 1807, the Danish capital was bombarded. After its capitulation, the British admirals sailed the whole Danish-Norwegian fleet to their own isles. On the 31st of October Crown Prince Frederick concluded a treaty of alliance with Napoleon; on the 4th of November Great Britain declared war on Denmark-Norway; forced by Napoleon, Frederick, who meanwhile had ascended to the throne as the sixth king of that name, on the 14th of March, 1808, issued a declaration of war against Great Britain's ally Sweden. Against her will, Norway was involved in wars on all fronts. Her own allies were far away. She had to help herself.

But just this isolated position in a time of danger and distress proved most beneficial to the Norwegians. The country could no longer be ruled from Copenhagen. As early as the 24th of August, 1807, a "Government Commission" for Norway was appointed under the presidency of Prince Christian August of Augustenborg; Count Wedel soon became a member of this body. Professor Worm-Müller has, in an extensive and brilliantly written monograph, made clear to us the apparently insurmountable obstacles which the men of the Government Commission had to encounter, as well as their resourcefulness, energy, foresight and persistence. Coastal defence, provisions, insurance, home production of war implements and army equipment—everything was looked after, everywhere the initiative of the Commission came to grips with the difficulties.

Meanwhile the two wars developed along different lines. The British restricted themselves to blockade of the Norwegian coast and attack of blockade-runners. To-day many

people know this blockade only from Henrik Ibsen's poem "Terje Viken," where he describes the fruitless effort of a Norwegian sailor to bring home from Denmark, in an open boat, two barrels of barley in order to save the lives of his wife and little girl. They conclude that the British must have behaved in a very cruel and merciless manner. That is not the truth. Episodes of such kind happened, but on the whole the British respected International Law, and even abstained from attacks on Norwegian territory. Soon secret negotiations were opened, and during the autumn of 1809 a new and strange system was introduced: licences were given—or sold—by the British Government to all trade which they regarded as beneficial. Norway received new provisions, and could sell her products in the English market. From our eastern ports not less than 486 loadings with wooden materials were shipped before the end of the year; 1810 recorded more than 1,500 such cargoes. The British prices were high, and Norway enjoyed a period of prosperity through trade with her mightiest enemy. In 1811 the British prices were lower, and the trade between the two countries at war with each other, assumed the normality of peace.

Against Swedish invasion troops heavy engagements were fought in 1808, and the Norwegian army could record victories at Toverud, Trangen and Prestebakke. But after the retreat of the Swedes the Norwegians stopped their counter-offensive at the frontier. Here, also, secret negotiations were opened. The Norwegians allowed a Swedish corps to withdraw in order to join a liberal revolution in Stockholm. Christian August was elected Swedish Crown Prince. He refused to invade the neighbouring country. A Norwegian party, headed by Count Wedel, began openly to work for a replacement of the Norwegian-Danish by a Norwegian-Swedish union. The Swedes, having lost Finland to Russia by the peace of Frederickshamm in September, 1809, might easily be won for such a plan. In Denmark great anxiety was aroused, and the Cabinet found it wise to forestall new conspiracies. A *status quo* peace with Sweden was hurriedly concluded in Jönköping, on the 10th of December, and when Christian August, after having accepted the position of

Swedish Crown Prince, suddenly died in May, 1810, Copenhagen hoped that the union with Norway had been saved.

Norwegian self-respect grew during the war events in 1808 and 1809, and the claim for a separate university was now launched in a more energetic and impressive way than ever before. Count Wedel led the propaganda. Frederick VI refused. Then the Norwegians themselves subscribed the required foundation fund, and Count Wedel told the King that the Norwegian university would be established in any case, if necessary without Governmental consent. Then Frederick VI yielded to the pressure, and a decree of September 2nd, 1811, prescribed the establishment of a Norwegian university in Christiania. In honour of himself he bestowed upon the new institution the gracious name "The Royal Frederick's University." But Norwegians have no reason to commemorate the uninterested and reluctant King Frederick, and it was nationally and historically correct that an Act of the 1930's removed the Royal title from the name, calling the institution simply the "University of Oslo."

Meanwhile the death of Christian August had made the Swedish succession actual and problematic once more. After long consideration the position was offered to the French Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, Duke of Ponte Corvo. He accepted; in 1803 a female soothsayer had predicted that he one day would become "King far away from Napoleon," and he remembered that improbable prophecy. The Swedes hoped to see Bernadotte as the reconqueror of Finland. But the French Marshal arrived in his new country with a ready-made plan of a much different scope. What he desired was appeasement with Russia and union with Norway. In negotiations with Napoleon he tried to win the Emperor over to these ideas, suggesting that Denmark should be compensated by German territory. But Napoleon refused categorically, and on the 26th of February, 1811, he declared in an instruction to his Foreign Minister, the Duke of Cadore, that the idea of a detachment of Norway from Denmark was nothing but a product of the Crown Prince's ebullient imagination. When Bernadotte returned to the plan, Napoleon resolved to castigate his former marshal. In January, 1812, a French army

invaded Swedish Pomerania, seized all Swedish ships in Pomeranian harbours, disarmed the Swedish garrisons, and imposed taxes to the Emperor. Bernadotte flew into a fury. He remarked to the Russian envoy, Count Suchtelen: "Although I have to act against my own country, I see no other way out than to liberate Europe from this monster."

Napoleon's rash occupation of Swedish Pomerania proved fateful. In July, 1812, Crown Prince Carl Johan, as Bernadotte now was called, met Czar Alexander in Finland, and concluded a treaty of friendship with him. With a Swedish army, Carl Johan took part in the campaign of 1813 against Napoleon. In return, the great allied powers promised him to transfer Norway to the King of Sweden. After the battle of Leipzig, Carl Johan marched against Denmark. In no time he broke down the Danish resistance. On the 14th of January, 1814, the Danes had to sign the treaty of Kiel. Frederick VI renounced for himself and all his descendants the sovereignty rights to Norway, ceding them to the King of Sweden. The Danish negotiator, Edmund Bourke, persuaded the Swedish plenipotentiaries at the very last moment to accept the insertion of a parenthesis in Article IV, in which the "kingdom of Norway" was geographically defined and the transfer was extended to "the dependencies." In the parenthesis was now added "Greenland, the Faroes and Iceland non comprised," although Norway had no other dependencies left than these three outlands; Bourke, however, told stories, and the Swedes were ignorant. With that parenthesis ended the union between Norway and Denmark.

X

THE NORWEGIAN CONSTITUTION

Crown Prince Christian Frederick had been sent to Norway as viceroy in May, 1813. He received the news of the Kiel treaty by courier on the 24th of January, 1814. His first reaction was to deny that Frederick VI was entitled to surrender the rights of his House, and Christian Frederick felt every reason to protest against being deprived of his own right of ascendance to the Norwegian throne. He conceived the plan of proclaiming himself King. But he did not get the support of intellectual Norway. The leaders of Norwegian public opinion had learnt from Rousseau the theory of popular sovereignty. They declared that Frederick VI, as the head of the Royal House, was entitled to renounce every claim to the Norwegian throne both for himself and his descendants, but they denied his right to cede an unconquered country to an enemy king. Their view was that the sovereignty now rested with the people. They claimed, consequently, the summoning of a Constituent Assembly, based on general elections.

The foremost exponent of the Norwegian theory was Georg Sverdrup, Professor of Greek at the newly-founded University. During a meeting of an Assembly of Notables at Eidsvoll, north of Christiania, on the 16th of February, he expressed himself in a clear and emphatic way. He concluded by saying: "No one has now a better right to the Norwegian crown than I, myself, or any other Norseman; it has now devolved on the Norwegian people, and the people will know how to depute it to that man in whom they find the greatest talents, capacities and virtues." Prince Christian Frederick declared that he had been convinced by Professor Sverdrup. The Assembly advised the Prince to conduct the supreme leadership of administration under the title of "regent," whilst writs were to be issued for the election of a National Assembly, entrusted with the mandate to draft and adopt a Constitution.

In the resolutions carried by the Assembly of Notables on February the 16th, 1814, we find a remarkable proof of that power which literature is capable of exercising. One of the notables, Marcus Gjöe Rosencrantz, had been a member of the Government Commission, but the twenty other partakers in the meeting were without any political experience. Their unanimous advice at this decisive moment in the history of our nation was based exclusively on the reading of theoretical treatises. It is worth while to mention that the six great business men present were in complete concert with Professor Sverdrup and the senior officials.

One might have expected that the Norwegian people would have felt benighted towards the revolutionary theory suddenly adopted as the national programme. They did not. Their response was one of immediate approval and satisfaction. In a diary from Christiania we read, under "February the 18th, 1814": "People are exhilarated with joy. They congratulate each other in the streets, they greet each other as free Norwegians."

The Constituents met at Eidsvold, on the 10th of April, 1814. All in all 112 representatives attended. Fifty-four were elected by the country districts, twenty-six by the towns, twenty-eight by the army and four by the navy. The special representation of the fighting forces underlined the seriousness of the situation. Everyone understood, also, that the national programme might lead to war with Sweden, perhaps even with the Great Powers. But not one of the Constituents was reluctant. The danger only operated as an inducement to speed. And the 112 representatives understood the art of concentration. On the 16th of May the Constitution, or "Fundamental Law," of Norway was adopted in its final form, on the 17th it was signed by the Constituents and promulgated in their names.

This Constitution of Norway is still in force, only slightly modified and modernised. By a curious coincidence it consists of just 112 articles, one for each Constituent. Unlike the typical constitutions promulgated between 1776 and 1812, it does not contain any solemn declaration of the rights of man, written in lofty and ostentatious style. Its language is

strictly legal, partly akin to that of the old Frostathing-Law. In its formulation it is, also, the work of three excellent lawyers: Christian Magnus Falsen, Wilhelm Frimann Koren Christie and Christian Adolph Diriks.

In the first article of the Constitution is given the Norwegian Declaration of Independence: "The Kingdom of Norway is a free, independent, indivisible and inalienable realm." It is added: "Her form of Government is a limited and hereditary Monarchy."

The principle of popular sovereignty which gave birth to the Constituent Assembly is nowhere explicitly stated, but it underlies the whole system, and must necessarily be applied for any deeper interpretation. If read on other assumptions, the Constitution may be misunderstood, for in its formal structure it embodies the doctrine of "separation of powers," as expounded by Montesquieu and adopted in the Constitution of the United States. Thus, its chapter headings speak of the "Executive Power" (the King in his "State Council"), the "Legislative Power" (the National Assembly, which is called the "Storthing"—the "Grand Thing") and the "Judiciary Power" (vested in the Supreme Court of Justice and the special Impeachment Court, the "Court of the Realm"). However, it would be more adequate to characterise the relations between these three "State Authorities" not as a division or separation, but as a ramification of powers. The fact is that Government, Parliament and Courts simply exercise their own specified functions on behalf of the people. They are trustees of separate parts of popular sovereignty.

There exists, in reality, also a fourth trustee, a fourth "Power in the State": the Electorate. This body is not identical with the people, as voting rights cannot be vested in all inhabitants, but consists of a constitutionally defined selection of the people. Its position within the framework of the Fundamental Law is most important, as it exercises the democratic function: it chooses the "representatives of the people," the members of the Storthing. Article 112 adds another remarkable function to the Electorate: it prescribes that no amendment to the Constitution can be adopted by the Storthing before the Electorate has had the opportunity of

discussing it; a general election must have taken place between the official publication of the proposals and their final introduction in the Storthing, which has to reject them or adopt them in their original form.

Article 5 prescribes: "The person of the King is sacred; he is irreproachable and unimpeachable. The responsibility rests with his Council." This article should be read as meaning that the King cannot make any resolution without the advice of a "State Councillor" (a minister), who is ultimately responsible before the Impeachment Court.

In the headline of Chapter C the Storthing is characterised as the "Legislative Power." The enumeration of Parliamentary functions in Article 75 reveals that this traditional denotation is most elliptic. The Storthing has not only the power "to enact and repeal laws;" among a great number of other prerogatives are those of imposing taxes, customs and other public charges; "opening loans on the credit of the Kingdom;" voting "sums of money necessary to meet the expenditure of the State;" fixing sums to be paid for the Royal household and appanages; controlling the finances; supervising the monetary system and electing the Auditors of State.

The Storthing is an original mixture of one-chamber and two-chamber system. All members ("Storthing-men") are elected by one and the same Electorate; but for the purpose of its legislative functions Parliament itself nominates from among its own members one-fourth to constitute an Upper House (the "Lagthing"—the "Law-Thing"), whilst the remaining three-fourths compose a Lower House (the "Odelsthing"—the "Odal-Thing"). In this way a thorough treatment of formal Acts of law is secured. All other resolutions are carried in plenary meetings, amendments to the Constitution requiring a majority of two-thirds. Against a Parliamentary Act the King is entitled to use the veto of the Crown twice, but if the rejected Act, without alteration, is repeated a third time by the Storthing, two general elections being held between the first and the last decision, the Act will be promulgated without Royal assent. The Constitution, as it read in 1814, did not explicitly treat the question of Royal sanction in relation to amendments of the Fundamental Law itself, but

its whole system reveals that no such approval was deemed necessary; a document written by one of the Constituents, which I rediscovered in 1931, argues, also, on the assumption that only decisions by the Odelsthing and the Lagthing need Royal confirmation. This logical rule was, as a final result of protracted controversies, at last included in the text of the Constitution, by an amendment of 1913.

Article 22 prescribes that the King in Council can dismiss military and naval commanders as well as any functionary attached to Government offices, but that other officials can only be dismissed by sentence of a criminal court. This rule is of special importance in relation to professional judges, because it provides for them the security they need as executives of their constitutional powers.

The Impeachment Court is a judiciary-political tribunal, composed by the Lagthing and the Supreme Court. Indictment in impeachment cases rests with the Odelsthing

Most of the general provisions aim at safeguarding personal liberty and civic equality. Article 96 prescribes: "No one can be convicted except according to law, or punished except according to judicial sentence." The same article forbids the use of torture as an incident of judicial process. Article 99 secures the citizens against unlawful arrest or imprisonment. The liberty of the Press is secured by Article 100. Article 101 forbids the granting of permanent privileges in restraint of trade. According to Article 105 "full compensation" shall be paid if any person has to surrender "movable or immovable property for public use." Article 108 forbids any erection of a new nobility; the old one was abolished by an Act of 1821. The principle of general conscription, "without regard to birth or fortune," is laid down in Article 109. Finally, Article 97 forbids retroactive laws.

Comparisons will show that the Norwegian Fundamental Law of May the 17th, 1814, is more liberalistic and democratic than its predecessors in the United States of 1787, Revolutionary France of the 1790's and Spain of 1812. Thus it happened that Norway, during her four months of new independent life, advanced from a politically completely backward country, governed by an absolute monarch residing in a

foreign capital, into the front line of free and democratic nations. And this grand progressive revolution was accomplished without any internal conflict and without loss of a single life.

The Constituents had "restored Norway's old Royal Seat," as Professor Sverdrup phrased it from the chair on the 17th of May. They had, consequently, to elect a new King. A unanimous assembly voted in favour of Christian Frederick. On the 19th of May the former Crown Prince appeared before the Constituents and accepted the throne. The next day the Assembly finished their work.

Article 33 in the Constitution prescribed: "The Councillor of State in charge of the Foreign Ministry shall keep a special protocol for such affairs as cannot be brought before the entire Council of State." The provision was clear, and not to be misunderstood: it ordered the establishment of a ministry for foreign affairs. However, Christian Frederick was not obedient to this unambiguous constitutional command: he appointed the "Council of State" prescribed in the Fundamental Law, but did not confer the management of foreign affairs on any of his ministers. His reasons for this omission are obvious. He wished to conduct a dynastic foreign policy in the hope that he, the legitimate Prince, might be able to displace Carl Johan as Crown Prince of Sweden, as he found it improbable that Metternich and Talleyrand would, in the long run, support Napoleon's former marshal, the ex-private Bernadotte.

As early as in February he had, however, sent his personal friend Carsten Anker, the owner of Eidsvoll Iron Work, to London in order to be a spokesman for Norway. Through his energetic and inspired work this old gentleman succeeded in winning great sympathy for the Norwegian people in the Press, Parliament and so-called "influential circles." Lord Grey, in particular, became a strong supporter of Norway's cause. But Anker had to report that the British Government stuck to the treaty of Kiel. Later on, Great Britain even took part in a diplomatic demarche against Christian Frederick, initiated by the other Great Powers. Carl Johan's army approached the frontier,—and the seven years of partial blockade had not strengthened Norway's military defence.

The news of the Constituent Assembly, however, impressed the British Government. They did not find it easy to force a democratic people into an undesired submission to a foreign King. Consequently, they resolved to examine the possibilities of a compromise, and sent a diplomat, Sir John Philip Morier, to Norway on a "special mission." Learning of the outcome of the Eidsvoll Assembly, Sir John arrived at the conclusion that the decisive thing for Norway would be to save the Constitution; if Carl Johan would adopt that democratic document as a basis for negotiations, a connection with Sweden would assume a new aspect. In a conversation of June the 6th with Christian Frederick, he recommended the convocation of an extraordinary Storthing, and suggested that the sovereignty should be placed in the hands of the people's representatives.

Christian Frederick realised that this solution might be the best Norway could hope for; he resolved to sacrifice his own interests, if necessary; on the 8th of July he asked his Council to make a draft for such amendments to the Constitution as must follow from a union with Sweden; and he accepted negotiations with Carl Johan. But the Swedes would not recognise Norway's sovereignty, and on the 29th of July hostilities were opened; 45,000 excellently-equipped Swedish troops marched against 25,000 Norwegians with old rifles and second-class powder.

The Norwegian plan of campaign was based on the Russian experiences of 1812: slow retreat to the inner part of the country until winter made counter-attacks favourable. But the soldiers wished to fight, and were near revolt when they had to retire behind the Glomma River. However, the fortress Fredrikssten stood up to her proud traditions, and did not surrender, whilst further north Colonel Samuel Andreas Krebs won the engagements of Lier on the 2nd, and Matrand on the 5th of August.

Even before the news of Matrand had reached headquarters, new negotiations were opened with the Swedes. Outside Fredrikssten, Carl Johan had met one of the leading Norwegian politicians, the big-business man Carsten Tank, and learnt from him that the whole Norwegian people would

defend the Constitution to the utmost; peace could only be built on the basis laid down at Eidsvoll. After his talks with Tank, Carl Johan found it wise to seek a compromise. He, the old revolutionary and admirer of Danton, felt, also, a strong sympathy for many of the ideas of the 17th of May, as they were now explained to him.

The Norwegian Council of State took charge of the negotiations. On the 14th of August the Convention of Moss was concluded. Christian Frederick promised to place the sovereignty in the hands of an extraordinary Storthing to be convoked immediately; in the meantime the Council of State should conduct the government and sign "by supreme order" (*par ordre suprême*). On behalf of the Swedish King, Carl Johan promised to negotiate with the Storthing through Commissioners, and only propose such amendments to the Eidsvoll Constitution as a union between Sweden and Norway would necessitate.

On the 7th of October the extraordinary Storthing met in Christiania. Christie was elected president, and became the dominating personality of the deliberations as well as the negotiations with the Swedish commissioners. The Storthing, accepting the resignation of Christian Frederick, declared the throne vacant, and appointed a Regency in conformity with Article 42 of the Constitution. During the negotiations tension was growing, as the Swedes launched a number of proposals which were not "necessary" but intended to increase the power of the common King. Norway was in a precarious situation: provisions were dwindling, the Swedish army stood on Norwegian soil, and Sweden was continuously supported by the Great Powers. But Christie did not give in. He rejected every Swedish proposal which was not in conformity with the national and democratic spirit of the Eidsvoll Constitution. One of the Swedish negotiators asked him what the Norwegians would have left if the negotiations should break down. Christie answered: "Desperation, sir." But his obstinacy was coupled with great diplomatic skill, extraordinary resourcefulness, and strange powers of persuasion. His success was, also, almost complete. Only, he was forced to drop Article 33; the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not an institu-

tion in being, and it was too late to claim its establishment at that juncture. He succeeded, on the other hand, in having introduced some new provisions, purposing to protect Norway against Swedish infiltration; he found such rules "necessary." Christie is the saviour of the Norwegian Constitution.

Carl XIII was elected King of Norway on the 4th of November, 1814. Thereupon the Storthing promulgated and published the Constitution in its new form, signed by "the representatives of the Kingdom of Norway." In 1815 the union was confirmed by a treaty between the two countries, the so-called "Act of the Realm."

The French Minister in Stockholm, M. de Rumigny, summed up the results of the negotiations in a secret report to the French Government: "It is easy to see that the Swedish hopes have not been fulfilled, and that the Norwegians are not the party which has conceded. . . . Norway has succeeded in remaining a nation of her own, independent and free, and her only connection with Sweden is of a confederate character. The only real advantage of Sweden is her security against a military attack from the west."

One evening about fifty years later, Björnson was walking across a long bridge, somewhere abroad, thinking of 1814. In a letter he describes his thoughts in these words: "I saw my little country rise like a morning after a night of distress. And I prayed to God that I could be with her, like a tiny ray of sun."

XI

A HUNDRED YEARS OF PEACE AND PROGRESS

In Norwegian history the years between 1814 and 1914 constitute a continuous period of peace and progress. Compared with the preceding centuries, these ten decades stand out as a rich and happy era. Economically, socially and culturally the whole epoch may be characterised by the suggestive word "evolution." Politically the development followed two main lines: one national and one democratic; both led to results planned by prominent leaders and cheered by a great majority of the people. External events did not at any time disturb this harmonious expansion of the nation's own forces.

Economically, the first problem independent Norway had to cope with was the monetary inflation inherited from the Danish period. Efforts to stop it had been in vain. In 1812 up to 1,800 paper units were paid for 100 units in silver. A devaluation of January 5th, 1813, in the ratio 1,200: 100 proved to be insufficient, and in 1816 the Storthing found it wise to devaluate the unit of 1813 to one-tenth of its official silver value, introducing a national unit, the "species daler" (dollar), based on silver. The issue of bank-notes was vested in a new Central Bank, the "Bank of Norway" (Norges Bank), and a silver fund for this institution was raised by a compulsory subscription of shares to be paid in silver by the wealthy class. Redemption was prescribed. But fearing that the silver fund was still too small, the Storthing of 1818 forbade redemption, and Norwegian dalers became a favourite object of international speculation. At one time 190 paper dalers had to be paid for 100 dalers in coin. Then followed deflation. In 1833 a devaluation was proposed by the brilliant economist Anton Martin Schweigaard. But his advice was disregarded, and the country had to experience deflation to its bitter end. At long last, silver parity was reached in 1842, and redemption set going. From that time until 1914 the Bank of Norway kept the Norwegian monetary system in perfect order, and although the country had to import much

foreign capital, she never experienced any difficulty in arranging required short term credits in foreign exchange. Meanwhile, the gold standard was introduced from the 1st of January, 1874, the gold unit receiving the inter-Nordic name "krone," and a value of one-fourth species daler.

So great were the variations in the monetary unit before 1842 that the effects of national monetary policy completely dominated over the influence exercised by international trade cycles. Thus, in the years preceding 1816 the population experienced the typical inflationary depreciation of accumulated private wealth; only, long term contracts were at that time generally concluded not in the national unit but in the nominal silver unit called "hamburger banco," the prototype of the "bancor" proposed by Lord Keynes in 1943; and such contracts were unimpaired by the inflation. The deflation from 1825 to 1842 caused a general depression. From 1842 to 1896, on the other hand, Norway partook, to a full degree, in the international business cycles, suffering particularly from the crisis of 1857. But from 1896 to 1914 Norway had her own national business cycles; she underwent a local crisis in 1899, whilst she, in return, did not even feel repercussions of the world crisis of 1907 and '08. On the whole, the pious believers in "economic curves" and regular business cycles could learn some sound scepticism from a study of Norwegian economic history.

The industrial plants from mercantilistic times were perhaps those enterprises which suffered the most from the monetary policy until 1842. Unfavourable changes in foreign markets added to their difficulties. Moreover, some of the old quality productions were made obsolete by technical inventions. Thus, the cobalt blue could not compete with the new, cheap aniline dyeing, and the Norwegian ironworks, which were based on charcoal, fought a strenuous campaign against foreign competitors using coke. All in all, the leading XVIIIth-century factories in Norway perished or lost much of their importance in the years subsequent to the Napoleonic wars, and during the deflation period 1825–42 no new plants of importance were built. But the last six decades of the century brought an uninterrupted period of industrial

construction and growth. All sorts of industry for the home market came into existence, and big paper pulp plants, based on floated timber and the direct use of water-power, added a new feature to production for export. Towards the end of the century, the discoveries in the theory and technique of electricity suddenly added enormous value to hundreds of Norwegian waterfalls, and opened up possibilities for an industrial development based on "white coals." In the years between 1900 and 1907, factories of world dimensions were built at Norwegian river banks.

Norwegian agriculture was still most primitive at the end of the XVIIIth century, and the monetary policy slowed down progress in the first four decades of the XIXth. Lack of technical knowledge was, however, the main impediment to a full development of the natural agents of production, and from the 1820's onwards agricultural schools spread knowledge to an ever-widening circle of peasants. When prices began to rise, in about 1850, the new generations of landowners and farmers were ready for reforms. In a rather short time they introduced great improvements, and when, in the 1870's and 1880's, falling prices in cereals caused difficulties, the modern forms of production showed great power of resistance. Indeed, the history of Norwegian agriculture from 1850 to 1914 is one of uninterrupted technical progress.

During the Napoleonic wars Norwegian shipping suffered serious losses, about 1,000 ships being sunk or captured by men of war or privateers. But new ship-yards were erected all along the coast, and building more than kept pace with destruction. In 1815 Norway possessed 1,673 merchantmen. Not all of them could be employed in the post-war period. But as early as 1823 a new expansion began, and in the subsequent decades Norwegian ships took over an ever-increasing part of international traffic, highly encouraged by the repeal of the British Navigation Act and by other liberalistic measures in the great trading countries. In 1880 Norway could boast of a commercial marine consisting of 8,100 ships; in tonnage she was then third in the world. But almost all her ships were sailing vessels, owned by small capitalists more or less connected with the sea, and the development of steamships was

a matter of great concern; the whole nation feared that the country would lag behind when the days of sailing vessels were numbered. But this fear induced action. Every year old sailers were replaced by new steamers. In 1914 not more than 947 sailing ships were left, only 275 of them representing considerable carrying capacity, whilst the steam fleet consisted of 2,107 ships, more than 1,100 of them trafficking the seven seas; some few motor ships had also been procured. In tonnage Norway was still a Great Power, occupying the fourth place among the seafaring nations.

The fisheries played, throughout the years between 1814 and 1914, their old important part in the economy of western and northern Norway. Spain, Portugal and Italy were the main markets. The greatest technical improvement belongs to the XXth century: the introduction of the motor boat propelled by petrol engine. Through this modern means of production, range and stability of the fishing-smacks are happily increased.

Since 1868 whale-catching in the open sea has become a sister activity of the fisheries. In that year the skipper Svend Foyn of Vestfold, after years of fruitless experiments, succeeded in constructing the harpoon-gun, which makes it possible to impede the escape of wounded whales. To begin with, the whale-catchers operated along the Norwegian coast. But the fishermen wished to keep the whale stock, as they thought that the whales chased the shoals of fish towards land. The Storthing listened to them, and in 1904 whaling along the Norwegian coast was forbidden by law. What were the whaling companies to do? Thanks to initiatives of Captain Carl Anton Larsen and the factory-owner Christen Christensen, they moved the activities of their catching fleet to the Antarctic, where big Norwegian establishments were erected in South Shetland and South Georgia, achieving marvellous economic results. Once more, sailors from Vestfold had initiated Norwegian expansion abroad.

In the first decades of the XIXth century the economic development of Norway was still, to a great extent, dependent on credit rendered by banks or great commercial houses in London and Hamburg. During the crisis of 1857 this

economic subservience proved most embarrassing, and Norwegian business men started to create a sufficient number of strong banks; commencements had been made as early as in the 1820's. The national crisis of 1899 caused several banking calamities, but they had been overcome before 1914. Norwegian insurance underwent a similar development.

The economic progress in the latter half of the XIXth century went hand-in-hand with a rapid growth of urban population. As late as in 1855 only 13·3 per cent of the inhabitants resided in towns; in 1900, on the other hand, 28 per cent. During these forty-five years the total number of townsmen grew from less than 200,000 to more than 600,000. The capital, Christiania, had in 1855 only 30,000 inhabitants; the figure for 1900 was 228,000. After 1900 the rapid growth of the population stopped in the majority of cities. But round them belts of villas came into existence, revealing the tastes of new generations. Most inhabitants of this "town-country" have their daily work in the cities. Thus, the relative "economic urban population" is still growing. All in all, the internal migrations after 1855 succeeded in creating a harmonious relationship between town and country, thus at last removing the old structural one-sidedness of Norwegian society. Even to agriculture itself the growth of urban population proved most beneficial, as it opened markets for surplus production of milk, butter, cheese, meat, eggs, fruit and vegetables, thus allowing a transition from a rather extensive use of land in a more or less autocratic farm economy to a lucrative business production, based on intensive utilisation of natural resources.

Broadly speaking, the economic development from 1814 to 1914 transformed the Norwegians from a poor to a rather wealthy nation, enjoying a standard of living which, compared with the general continental level, must be deemed relatively high.

The progress was, in almost all branches of production and trade, due to private initiative, private capital and private management. No country owes more to the liberalistic principles of the XIXth century than Norway.

This statement, however, does not imply any assertion of

public passivity in the economic and social fields during these ten decades of evolution. On the contrary, the State pursued most active economic and social policies.

In the first instance, the State created new networks of internal communications. During the first decades the postal traffic along the coast as well as with foreign countries was run by State ships. From the middle of the XIXth century the State built first-class high roads all over the country. Further, State initiative led to the construction of the first railway in Norway; it was built by an English company, with Robert Stephenson as technical leader, and opened on the 1st of September, 1854. Later, the State took practically the whole railway construction in hand. On the 1st of January, 1855, the State opened the first Norwegian telegraph line. Telegraph, like the Royal Mail, has ever since been a State monopoly. In the XXth century also the telephone lines were taken over by the State.

Secondly, the State devoted an ever-increasing degree of attention and money to educational purposes. At the beginning of the XIXth century knowledge was still a privilege of the well-to-do. A hundred years later perhaps no people in the world were better educated than the Norwegians. There is no doubt that the ever-improving popular education is a main factor not only in Norway's social, cultural and democratic life, but in her high economic efficiency as well.

Thirdly, the State tried to encourage economic activity through her customs policy. The movement for free trade kept pace with the British development; thus, the first tariff wholly built on the principles of Liberalism, "Schweigaard's tariff," carries the date of 1842—that is to say, it was contemporary with Peel's first Liberal tariff. From 1873 to 1897 free trade dominated completely. As a counter-measure against Sweden a moderate protectionism was introduced in 1897. In 1905 the claims from the new industries led to the adoption of higher tariff rates.

Fourthly, legislation supported the economic evolution. Mercantilism had laid down all economic and social rules in special concessions and letters of privileges, valid only for individual favoured enterprises; Liberalism, on the other

hand, enacted laws of a general character, valid for all enterprises within production and trade.

Almost all such laws promulgated after 1814 contained some protecting provisions in favour of the weaker party; that is to say, they come partly under the head of what is commonly called labour legislation. Only one Parliamentary Act was ever passed which, in limitation of purpose and scope, was still mercantilistic: the Act concerning Röros Copper Works, of 1818. This law is, therefore, of special interest, as it may be taken to embody the principles for labour protection on which Norwegian Mercantilists and Liberalists agreed. The main rules were the following: Each labourer who, at the age of sixty-five years or later, ceased to work, was entitled to a pension from the company, regulated by the size of his family, his shown ability, and his wages at retirement. In case of illness caused by his labour, he was entitled to free treatment, full wages the first month and half wages the second. Labour hours underground were fixed at eight during the winter season and nine during summer. The company had to provide the labourers and their families with food at cost price plus 10 per cent. Similar rules were, through the Act of 1842, introduced for all mines; the latter law conferred upon the labourer the right to claim his whole wages in money, thus giving him the opportunity of protecting himself against the misuse of the so-called "truck-system." Protecting rules, safeguarding shopmen, journeymen and apprentices are found in Acts of 1839 and 1842; the Seamen's Act of 1860 introduced regulations concerning labour conditions on board; the Cottar's Act of 1851, finally, was drafted with the exclusive purpose of protecting the cottars, as the weaker party, against any exploitation by their landlords, making them, in the strictly legal sense, the most privileged class of Norway.

A modern legend tells us that Liberalism in its very idea was identical with the complete passivity of the State in the economic and social fields; this policy is generally characterised by the misunderstood physiocratic slogan "laissez-faire." There is not much of such "laissez-faire" to be found in the liberalistic legislation of Norway. Schweigaard, the recognised

leader of Norwegian Liberalism was, also, a decided adversary of "the principle of non-intervention," and has written a slashing criticism of this superficial and immoral maxim.

The economic and social legislation of Schweigaard's time did not, however, embrace the plants of the new industries, and conditions in their workshops escaped the attention of Central Administration until the middle of the 1870's. Then a report of an educational committee suddenly revealed that "children, particularly at the age when they are liable to attend school, are frequently employed in factories or for other industrial work in a way which is harmful to their health and obstructive to a profitable school attendance." Almost immediately a well-known statistician, Jacob Neumann Mohn, was requested to draft a proposal for "an Act concerning employment of children and young persons for regular work outside their homes." He did more. On New Year's Eve, 1878, he finished nothing less than a Beveridge Report of the 1870's, concluding with an elaborated draft for a complete Act of labour protection. Mohn was a realist: he proposed the appointment of permanent State Inspectors for all factories, arguing that without such regular control the law would be ineffective.

Beveridge Reports are, however, not always popular with Governments and Parliaments. Action was not taken until the 1890's. But in 1892 the Storthing passed an "Act concerning Inspection of Factories," prescribing a number of protective measures, and in 1894 State insurance against labour accidents in industrial plants was introduced. Then followed fourteen years in which social reform did not reach the limelight of politics. But between 1908 and 1915 a number of urgent social problems found an expedient solution. This was mainly due to the unceasing efforts of one dynamic personality: the radical leader Johan Castberg. Some of the new Acts lay in continuation of the social reforms of the 1890's: Accident Insurance was in 1908 introduced for fishermen, and in 1911 for seamen, whilst the Factory Inspection Act underwent important modernisations in 1909 and 1915. Other Acts dealt with labour conflicts; the final system, adopted in 1915, established a special Labour Court for the handling of

contractual controversies, whilst conflicts of interest were made the subject of public mediation. Thanks to this labour legislation, Norway occupied, a hundred years after the revival of 1814, a position in social organisation among the most advanced countries of the world.

Although the XIXth century brought a unique development of Norwegian economic life, and although industrial production in 1900 gave livelihood to 29·43 per cent of the population as against 5·80 per cent in 1801, whilst commerce and retail trade sustained 14·97 per cent in 1900 as against 2·37 per cent in 1801, the resources of the country were not sufficient to employ the great increase of rural population. But in the XIXth century Norway no longer had outlands that could absorb her surplus of young men and women. From the 1840's until 1914 a big emigration took place, mostly to the United States of America. Cleng Peerson has been named as the leading personality among the first emigrants to the great North-American Republic. Between 1836 and 1915 the Norwegian emigration overseas amounted to 754,561; in 1910 there were 400,000 born Norwegians in the United States, and 900,000 of Norwegian parents. But it does not lie within the purpose of this short survey to tell the history of the Norsemen in the United States.

During the first decades after 1814 Norway's economic and social development progressed in an atmosphere of relative political tranquillity. In the Storthing there existed a certain tension between officials on one side and peasants on the other, and a small opposition generally voted in favour of more radical proposals than those which could obtain majority. But organised parliamentary parties had not yet come into existence fifty years after the promulgation of the Constitution. Meanwhile, the democratic development initiated at Eidsvoll was faithfully carried farther by the Storthing. Thus, an Act of 1837 conferred extensive local government on all municipalities,—the cities had enjoyed the possession of certain rights to manage their own economic affairs since the beginning of the XVIIIth century.

Outside the monetary sphere the first conflict which aroused serious difficulties related to the economic settlement with Denmark. At the dissolution of the union a heavy debt rested on the double monarchy, and the Danish Government claimed a Norwegian contribution to the payment, in the form of a lump sum once and for all. In Norway the peasants argued that throughout the period of union Norway had been economically exploited by the Danes, and should rather claim refund of big sums than decide to partake in the covering of any debt. Against such arguments the Danes pointed out the fact that the debt, almost in its entirety, was a result of armaments for common defence of the two countries, and that the Norwegians, according to International Law, had to take their share. The Great Powers supported the Danish claims, and even threatened to restore the earlier union if Norway tried to evade her liabilities. Carl Johan, who in 1818 ascended the two Scandinavian thrones, realised that it would be most unwise of Norway to disavow her part of the debt, but he wished the Norwegians to bring in a counter-claim for the restoration of Iceland, the Faroes and Greenland, as these dependencies had been kept back by the Danes on false pretences. He thus advised the Norwegians to adopt the only strong and logical attitude that could be taken. But the Norwegians were afraid of entering grand politics and did not press their righteous claim of restoration, although Christie and the extraordinary Storthing in 1814 had protested against the Danish encroachment. Under such circumstances, Carl Johan asked the British Minister in Stockholm, Lord Strangford, to mediate. With the permission of his Government Lord Strangford accepted the mandate, and, thanks to his intervention, Norway obtained a settlement which economically was surprisingly favourable. But when the Storthing, in 1821, voted the necessary sum for the Norwegian contribution, the resolution received a most clumsy form: it can be read as involving a formal renunciation of the claims for restoration of Iceland, the Faroes and Greenland.

Not only in the debt conflict with Denmark but during the whole of his reign, from 1818 to 1844, Carl Johan defended Norway's interests with force and efficiency. His foreign

policy lay, also, in line with Norwegian interests and desires. He kept up a warm friendship with Russia, whilst at the same time he did everything to obtain close contact with Great Britain and France. His main idea was that co-operation between the eastern and the two western Great Powers would be the safest guarantee for a lasting peace, and that the two Scandinavian countries should do their best to facilitate the friendly relations between Russia and the democracies of the west.

In one important relation Norway benefited very much by Carl Johan's friendship with Russia. Whilst the frontier between northern Norway and Sweden was fixed by the peace of Knaeröd in 1613, no definite borderline had ever been drawn between Norway and Russia with her protectorate, since 1809, the Grand Duchy of Finland. Three big territories, Neiden, Pasvik and Peisen, were still common, as they had been in the early days. At the request of his Norwegian State Council, Carl Johan opened negotiations with the Russians in order to achieve a partition of the common territories. The Storthing of 1824 elaborated a detailed draft for a new frontier, which left most of the inland to the Russians, but included the greater part of the coastline in Norway —a just plan, because almost all sea traffic was purely Norwegian. In 1825 officers from both sides discussed the question during strenuous marches through the desolate tracts of land along the Arctic shores, and concluded, on the basis of the Norwegian plan, with a unanimous proposal for a definite borderline, which was finally accepted by a treaty of May the 14th, 1826.

During the reign of Oscar I (1844–59), the son and successor of Carl Johan, completely new situations in foreign politics arose.

In 1848 the Germans attacked Denmark and her southern duchies. Oscar I realised that a German conquest of Denmark would mean a deadly threat to the independence of his own two countries. He mobilised 15,000 Swedes and 3,000 Norwegians, thus indicating in a conspicuous way that he might possibly intervene. Only reluctantly did the Storthing vote the required sums for the military preparations, stressing

that a "lasting rapprochement to Denmark" had to be ruled out; historic experiences dictated this reservation. But the younger generations in Norway nourished strong pro-Danish sympathies, and would probably have greeted a declaration of war against the Germans with great enthusiasm. However, no such step proved necessary, as Denmark received sufficient diplomatic support from Russia: on the 8th of May, 1848, the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Nesselrode, told the Prussians that an attack on Denmark proper would be regarded as *casus belli*. Ten days later Prussia asked for British mediation, and on the 22nd of May the German troops were ordered to retreat. Nevertheless, Oscar I undertook a military demonstration, transferring, in the days subsequent to the 8th of June, 4,500 men to the Danish island of Funen, and it was under his aegis that the armistice was concluded in Malmö on the 26th of August. But when hostilities, on Danish initiative, were resumed in 1849, Oscar I took a less anti-Prussian standpoint, and the appearance of a Norwegian naval squadron in Danish waters in June, 1849, was regarded as a demonstration for peace. After the conclusion of a new armistice in July, a military Convention of Christiania prescribed that 3,000 Swedes and 1,000 Norwegians should occupy Slesvig until the peace treaty had been signed. The policy of Oscar I in 1848 and 1849 has been judged in different ways, but it is undeniable that Sweden and Norway rendered a political contribution to the repulse of German aggression.

In 1854 Oscar I was subject to heavy pressure from the British Government, who wished him to join the Crimean War against Russia. To begin with, he absolutely refused to deviate from the political course of his father, but successively the British representations impressed him, and thoughts of reconquering Finland began to tempt him; his unpublished diary reveals how this slow and only half-conscious change in his mind influenced his foreign policy. Lord Palmerston, who, in February, 1855, became British Prime Minister, added to the pressure by passing on to King Oscar some reports from the British consul-general in Christiania, arguing that the Russians were preparing an attack on northern Norway. No one has ever found out whether these reports

had any foundation in facts. It is true that the treaty of 1826 was, from time to time, criticised by Russian business men and writers, and that, during a local conflict concerning some claimed Finnish privileges of fishing in Norwegian waters, the Government of St. Petersburg, in 1852, temporarily closed the frontier between Norway and Finland. But Nordic research workers who, in the 1920's, obtained permission to examine the relevant Russian archives, did not find the slightest indication of aggressive plans against the north of Norway. On the whole, Russian relations with Norway, apart from the said closing of the Finnish frontier in 1852, have always been friendly and correct. From the Norwegian point of view it was, therefore, deplorable and regrettable that Oscar I signed the so-called "November Treaty" of 1855 with Great Britain and France, as this strange document was directed against Russia in the most undisguised way. Article I contained the solemn pledge of the King of Sweden and Norway not to cede any part of his territory to Russia, nor to confer any rights of pasture or fishing on Russian subjects. In Article II British and French support was promised against possible Russian aggression. Oscar I concluded this treaty without the advice of any Norwegian.

The next time that Sweden and Norway became involved in world politics was in 1864. Bismarck, who since 1862 dominated Prussia and her German satellites, found a pretext for attacking Denmark; he realised that the possession of the duchies Holsten and Slesvig would be necessary if a German federation should ever aspire to the position of a world power. The son and successor of Oscar I, Carl XV (as he called himself also in Norway, although only three earlier Carls had filled the Norwegian throne), felt the warmest sympathy for the Danes, and wished to help. But the military strength of his two countries had not kept pace with technical development; his brother, Duke Oscar, who was in command of the navy, told the French Minister: "I have no armed ship and not a single rifled gun." King Carl, however, hoped for help from the Great Powers. But Queen Victoria was almost pro-German because her dear Albert had been a German Prince, the Russian Czar could be regarded as a friend of

Bismarck, and Napoleon III dared not risk open hostilities. Under such circumstances both the Swedish and the Norwegian State Councils claimed that neutrality should be maintained. Carl XV could not oppose them. Denmark had to fight alone. After a short campaign Bismarck won the two duchies, which half a century later served the Germans as the necessary strategic base for their First World War against the freedom of the seas.

In 1864, as in 1855, the unsatisfactory position of Norway in relation to foreign politics was clearly revealed by events. Nevertheless, the Norwegians did not immediately claim a change of procedure in foreign affairs. A number of urgent internal reforms demanded priority. The oppositional party —"the Left"—concentrated on two of them: introduction of popular jury in criminal cases and admission for the State Councillors to appear in the Storthing,—the Eidsvoll constitution had kept the executive power completely separated from the national assembly. Conservative elements put up a stiff resistance to both reforms, and from the beginning of the 1860's to 1884 the country was torn asunder by political struggles between the Left and the "old regime." The Government in power was at last impeached and its members sentenced to forfeit their high offices. Oscar II, who, in 1873, had succeeded his brother, Carl XV, sided openly with the Conservatives, but dared not attempt a *coup d'état*, and on Midsummer eve, 1884, he sent a personal letter to the leader of the Left, Johan Sverdrup, asking him to form a Cabinet. The appointment of the oppositional Government three days later marked the introduction of the Parliamentary system. Other reforms followed, though more slowly than expected; thus, universal suffrage for men was not introduced until 1898.

Long before they had dealt with the main internal reforms, Johan Sverdrup and his men had to face the problems connected with the unsatisfactory management of Norwegian foreign affairs. An event in 1885 made them still more urgent than ever before: on the 12th of March that year an amendment to the Swedish Constitution was adopted with the purpose of bringing foreign affairs under a more direct

control of the Rikdsdag. From the Swedish standpoint the amendment of 1885 could be characterised as democratic, but in relation to Norway it had an unintentional humiliating effect, as the Foreign Minister would now have to assume Parliamentary responsibility towards the representatives of the Swedish people, whilst the representatives of the Norwegian people were deprived of every means of making him answerable or of influencing his policy.

All Norwegians agreed that such a system was intolerable. But it proved impossible to find a common platform for the claims of the two contesting political parties. The Left desired a separate Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, responsible to the Storthing, and separate Norwegian diplomacy. In the view of many Conservatives such a system was incompatible with the preservation of the union; their party—the "Right"—recommended, therefore, to maintain the "unity of foreign policy," but claimed that the Foreign Minister should be responsible to the Storthing as well as to the Riksdag, or only to a special committee, comprising the same number of members from each country; as a consequence, a Norwegian as well as a Swede might be called upon to be Minister of External Affairs. The Left feared that any such artificial co-operation might initiate an extension of the union, to the disadvantage of Norway as the weaker party; besides, in their heart of hearts all true adherents to the policy of the Left looked forward to a completely independent Norway, emancipated from any political connection with Sweden.

The impossibility of uniting all Norwegians behind a common programme for reform in the management of foreign affairs induced the Left of the 1890's to concentrate their efforts on a more restricted object. Neither the Constitutional amendments of November the 4th, 1814, nor the subsequent treaty with Sweden, the "Act of Realm," contained any provision concerning the consular service, but the commercial representation abroad of Norwegian as well as of Swedish interests had, ever since 1815, been in the hands of common officials. To Norwegian shipping, industry and trade, this state of affairs became more embarrassing every year, as

Norwegian interests abroad were most different from those of Sweden. Since 1888 Sweden was protectionistic, whilst Norway still stuck to free trade. Sweden had few but great foreign markets; the markets of Norway were scattered all over the world. In the export of wooden materials the two countries were keen competitors. The Norwegian mercantile marine held the third place in world tonnage, whilst the Swedes could not be called a real "seafaring nation." Nevertheless, the common consular service was completely dominated by the Swedes and organised primarily for the promotion of Swedish interests. A Norwegian governmental committee, with the prominent shipowner Christian Michelsen, of Bergen as its leading member, published, in October, 1891, a report concluding in a proposal for the establishment of a separate Norwegian consular service. The Left adopted this plan as their principal programme.

To begin with, the Conservatives supported the new national action. But the leaders of the Left were not clever diplomats. They overlooked the necessity of securing Swedish co-operation for the dissolution of the existing common service and tried to solve the whole problem through a Norwegian Parliamentary Act. Oscar II declared that he would use his veto against this Act, in accordance with Article 79 of the Fundamental Law, and the Cabinet warned that they would refuse to countersign the veto resolution. The result was a constitutional conflict, lasting from 1892 to 1895. Then the Swedes threatened war. Norway was not united, as the Conservatives had been against the aggressive course adopted by the Left, and neither military nor naval defence was sufficiently prepared. Realising the critical situation of the country, the Storthing found it wise to abandon their policy and open negotiations, on a broad basis, with the Swedes. This resolution was taken on the 7th of June, 1895. But everyone felt that the retreat could not be final. What mattered was to be better prepared at the next cross-roads.

The ten years from 1895 to 1905 were consequently used for a well-planned and effective rearmament. As a first step, four capital ships were built at Armstrong's. They received

the significant names *Harald Fairhair*, *Tordenskiold*, *Norway*, and *Eidsvoll*. Then, the army was fully equipped with a new, first-class rifle of Norwegian invention, the "Krag-Jörgensen." Furthermore, Colonel Georg Stang, from 1900–1903 Minister of Defence, succeeded in carrying through two of his favourite military plans: Firstly, he had built some salient forts just behind the Swedish frontier; and these were constructed in accordance with technical principles that did not obtain general recognition until after the battle of Verdun in 1916. Secondly, he ordered from a practically unknown factory 120 guns of a new artillery type; the tests gave such satisfactory results that both Krupp and Creuzot found it expedient almost immediately to adopt a similar system.

Thanks to these measures, Norway's defence was well prepared when the Storthing, in 1905, resumed action and passed a new Bill concerning a separate Norwegian consular service. Christian Michelsen, who had just become Prime Minister, chose the moment for the decisive conflict. On the 27th of May the Bill was placed before the King in Stockholm. He refused to sanction it. The State Council, on their side, refused to countersign the veto and handed in their resignation. Oscar II admitted, officially, that he was unable to form a new Cabinet, and on the 7th of June the Michelsen Ministry laid down their power in the hands of the Storthing. The national assembly unanimously empowered the resigning Cabinet to assume the duties of the King and exercise the governmental power in pursuance of the Constitution, with the amendments made necessary through the dissolution of the union, as the union had ceased to exist when Oscar II discontinued to function as Norwegian King.

The Storthing took, however, an immediate step to fill the vacancy. In an address to King Oscar the throne was offered to a Prince of his House. Neither the Storthing nor the Government received any official reply, but secret Norwegian emissaries to Stockholm reported that Oscar II was decidedly against the whole plan. In the middle of June Christian Michelsen knew for certain that if Norway should have a King of her own he had to be found outside Sweden.

A new candidate was launched by Mr. Frits Wedel-Jarls-

berg, who resigned as Swedish and Norwegian Minister to Madrid and Lisbon as soon as he received the news of the resolution of the 7th June. His proposal was Prince Carl of Denmark. The Norwegian Government gave the plan their most serious consideration, and reached the conclusion that no better candidate could be found. Thirty-three years of age, Prince Carl was in the prime of manhood and still young enough to be able to adapt himself to new surroundings. He had been educated as a naval officer, and possessed that strong love for the sea which is so common amongst Norwegians. In his native country he had gained a noteworthy popularity. He had a son of two, so the succession seemed to be secured. And, last but not least: he was married to Princess Maud, the youngest daughter of Edward VII.

Christian Michelsen left it to Mr. Wedel to carry out the secret diplomatic negotiations concerning the vacant throne. The results were most encouraging, and on the 1st of July King Edward cabled to the British Chargé d'Affaires in Copenhagen that both he and Queen Alexandra would be pleased to see Prince Carl on the Norwegian throne. The Kaiser was not so pleased. He had hoped to see one of his own sons hold the Norwegian sceptre, and was, failing this, in favour of another Danish Prince. But after an exchange of telegrams between the German Chancellor and Christian Michelsen, he gave the Norwegian Prime Minister the assurance that he would still preserve his friendly feelings for Norway if Prince Carl became King. With full consent of the British Foreign Office, King Edward worked for his son-in-law through letters and telegrams. Asked by Fridtjof Nansen, who acted as a special envoy of the Norwegian Government, Prince Carl declared himself willing to come to Norway, even in case of war with Sweden.

Meanwhile the Storthing appealed to the people for a confirmation "of the effected dissolution of the union." A plebiscite with a secret ballot was arranged on the 13th of August; 368,208 votes were cast in favour of the dissolution, whilst only 184 voted against; 85·4 per cent of the electoral body had rushed to the poll. The women delivered an address of support; on 4,275 lists it contained 244,765 personal signatures.

The Swedes realised that a united Norwegian nation stood against any form of union. Their choice was between an acknowledgement of the new situation and a devastating war. The old King, as well as all liberal and social-democratic Sweden, was against war. An extraordinary Riksdag resolved to recognise the new Norway—on conditions. Negotiations were opened in Karlstad. Christian Michelsen persuaded his enthusiastic countrymen to give serious concessions in order to evade war. The result was that the Norwegians consented to dismantle Georg Stang's frontier forts. But Norway did not have to enter into any new real liabilities.

To Prince Carl the path to the Norwegian throne was now open. But knowing that there existed an opposition of Republicans, he claimed a vote of the people. As the whole population held Prince Carl to be the best candidate if the national kingdom should be re-established, the ballot was, in reality, one of principle only. The Monarchists won a great victory. On the 12th and 13th of November 259,536 citizens gave their assent to the election of the new King, whilst 69,264 votes were cast against; 75·3 per cent of the electorate had taken part. Prince Carl chose to ascend the throne as King Haakon VII; his little son was called Crown Prince Olav. The King stated that his motto would be: "All for Norway."

The years between 1814 and 1905 were not only a period of political and economic progress; they mark, also, the golden age of Norwegian literature and art.

Henrik Wergeland was the great poet of the national dawn. In his lyrics he revived the force and fire of the "Edda" lays. Like the old volve he was a seer and a prophet. But his "Voluspo" did not depict any Ragnarokk. Being a typical son of the 1830's, Henrik Wergeland was a believer in evolution and progress. In his vision of the lasting future he saw peace and happiness,—

> "a resurrection of Jesus Messiah
> in the hearts of mankind."

Whilst Wergeland derived his deepest impressions from British literature, and particularly from Shakespeare and

"Ossian," his contemporary, Welhaven, tried to transfer the traditional style of Danish poetry to Norwegian lyrics. But in his later works Welhaven found the genuine melodies of Norwegian folk-lore.

It was in the 1840's and 1850's that the Norwegian folk-songs, folk-melodies and folk-tales were discovered by the intellectuals, collected and published. The folk-songs are, for a greater part, imitations of foreign romances and ballads; there is only little spontaneous force in them. But the folk-melodies possess all the charm of innocence and beauty; they reveal deep congeniality with Norwegian nature; mountain and fjord, valley and waterfall, moor and wood, table-land and glacier—scenery transformed into tunes, thus is this music which has taught every Norwegian so much about himself. The folk-tales express other features of Norwegian character. They combine the condensed brevity of the saga style with a capricious many-sidedness of underlying intentions. Events are simultaneously great and small, tragic and comic, good and evil; the stories themselves are as romantic in their fantastic imagination as they are realistic in their bitter wisdom of life. Thus, the Norwegian folk-tales visualise a unity of contrasts. "Twisight" called Aasmund Vinje the power to see things in this twofold way. As a symbol of the national spirit in the Norwegian folk-tales we can take the favourite type of their fairy-world, the "troll," a giant with several heads, which are able to quarrel with each other. "Twofold made" is also the Norwegian female fairy, the "hulder:" she has a beautiful face, but a cow's tail. If we compare the masculine and self-ironic Norwegian folk-tales with the German ones, which are either horrifying or sentimental, we obtain a deep insight into the difference between Norwegian and German national character.

The organist Ludvig Mathias Lindeman was the great collector of Norwegian folk-music; the folk-tales were collected and told by the scientist Peter Christen Asbjörnsen and the clergyman Jörgen Moe. Three men discovered the inspiring power of Norwegian folk-melodies for music as high art: Ole Bull, Rikard Nordraak and Edvard Grieg. The national value of the folk-tales, on the other hand, was immediately discovered even by the "man in the street," and their influence on

Norwegian literature is immeasurable. But their spirit was revealed to the international public in one great work, Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, perhaps Norway's most spirited and witty contribution to world literature; this dramatic poem is a mighty paraphrase of Asbjörnsen's fairy-tales—as well as the most magnificent creation of Ibsen's own master mind.

Ole Bull learnt from peasant fiddlers, living near the country-seat of his family, to play the old dance strains of western Norway. He filled them with his own sparkling, vibrating vitality, carrying them from triumph to triumph through the northern countries, France, Italy, Great Britain and the United States. But the Germans were left completely unmoved. Ole Bull did not play "according to plan."

The composer Rikard Nordraak had the same festivity in him as Ole Bull; his melodies and tunes possess all the glittering courage of youth; his complete works could be edited under the title "Overture to Life." But he did not get the chance to compose more than the overture. In 1866 he died in a Berlin garret, only twenty-four years old. His premature death is the greatest loss ever suffered by Norwegian art. For his imagination and creative power was of the highest rank. It was his main idea, in co-operation with his cousin Björnson, to give birth to a number of musical dramas with motives from Norwegian history, not as copies of Wagner's plays, but in planned contrast to the high-flown and overstrained German style. His music to Björnson's *Mary Stuart in Scotland* proves that he would have been equal to the task. Here, as in most of his compositions, Nordraak showed his rare sense for the monumental line, and his power to build those simple harmonies that are genuinely classic. We retrace those qualities in his melody for our national anthem, Björnson's "Yes, we love this land of ours," which has become world-famous during the present war.

Edvard Grieg learnt the value of Norwegian folk music from Nordraak, who was the friend of his youth, and he made it his life's aim to re-create Norway in music. He succeeded to the fullest extent. In his erratic rhythms and his faceted melodies he has revealed the hard beauty of Norwegian nature and the compound soul of the Norwegian people. All later

generations of Norwegians have identified the musical side of their national character with Grieg. Not without reason did a Danish critic, Hugo Seligman, write this remarkable line: "Grieg is more Norwegian than Norwegian folk-music." To some of the German critics the nationalism of Grieg was something hostile. One of them invented a new verb to express his contempt, writing: "Grieg norways."

Nordraak and Grieg, as well as their charming predecessor Halfdan Kjerulf, were most fortunate in this respect, that they lived at the same time as great Norwegian lyrists. They were all contemporary with Welhaven, Ibsen and Björnson; Grieg, also, with two other masters of poetry: Aasmund Vinje and Arne Garborg. It is, therefore, natural that the song became the adequate expression of the Norwegian golden age in art and literature. Grieg, in particular, profited by his congeniality with our poets; his greatest work and safest claim to international immortality, the "Peer Gynt Suite," was also written as a musical revival of Ibsen's grand epos.

But Ibsen, Björnson, Vinje and Garborg—the real "big four" of XIXth century Norwegian literature—were much more than lyrists.

Ibsen's greatest contribution is his creation of the modern drama. It is necessary to repeat that statement, although it is a truism and a commonplace. In those years when his works became world-famous—the time between the publication of *Peer Gynt* in 1867 and his death in 1906—his readers and critics were most occupied with his problems and prophecies. To posterity he will stand as the great creator of living characters. The XIXth century men and women have never been revealed more clearly, more intensely, more convincingly than in Ibsen's plays. Pessimists of our own times doubt that later generations will be able to perceive the finer shades of Ibsen's psychology; thus, Thomas Mann wrote, in the 1930's, that a drama like *The Wild Duck* was unintelligible to the typical intellectualists of modern shape.

Björnson, also, won celebrity as dramatist. But few of his plays will survive. His lyrics, on the other hand, have retained all their freshness, and his personality will for ever be alive in Norwegian history: he was the spiritual leader of the

whole national and democratic movement in Norway from the 1850's to his death, in 1910. As orator and writer of articles he is unsurpassed. In his later years he was one of the few men of renown who tried to create a world opinion—for freedom and truth.

Vinje and Garborg belonged to peasant families, but absorbed the whole of intellectual urban civilisation. In their writings the friction between town and country is revealed in a most dramatic way. Both these authors were marvellous observers ; they reflect the ever-changing currents of public opinion, but in a personal transformation. Vinje was an outstanding contributor to the daily discussions from about 1850 to his death, in 1870, Garborg from about 1870 until after 1900.

In the XIXth-century valuation, neither Vinje nor Garborg was fully recognised. At the side of Ibsen and Björnson their contemporaries used to mention the excellent novelists Jonas Lie and Alexander Kielland; the latter is of importance to modern world literature, in so far as his charming Stavanger story *Garman and Worse* is the prototype of Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*.

A reason for the deplorable fact that neither Vinje nor Garborg reached the widest circles of Norwegian readers is to be found in their language. Only seldom did they write in the same idiom as Ibsen and Björnson, although they both mastered it. Almost all their books are published in the so-called "country language" (*landsmaal*), which had been constructed in the 1840's by the ingenious self-taught philologist Ivar Aasen, mainly on the basis of the archaic dialects, especially on those of the west, and which was launched from nationalistic quarters as a competitor to the Danish-influenced ordinary language of literature. Vinje and Garborg proved that the country idiom is most usable in belletristic literature, but approaching the dialects of their childhood, both deviated from the forms of Aasen.

Not only in literature and music was the XIXth century a period of Norwegian revival and renaissance. The golden age embraced painting also.

Johan Christian Dahl was the great pioneer. He discovered the artistic beauty of Norwegian landscapes; his grand and forceful reproductions of our nature will probably never be surpassed. He achieved his first success in 1814, and was the acknowledged leader of Norwegian artistic life until his death, in 1857, although he spent much of his later life in Germany. Dahl, and his somewhat younger contemporary, Thomas Fearnley, created a national style in painting—naturalistic but poetic. The next generation of Norwegian painters came under the influence of the German Düsseldorff school, with its artificial brown colouring and academic composition. Only one of the Norwegian "Düsseldorfers" can claim immortality: August Cappelen. The 1880's brought about a complete turn in the trend of Norwegian painting: the German influence was substituted by the French. At the same time, the younger painters approached Dahl and Fearnley in their conception of Norwegian nature. Fritz Thaulow, Erik Werenskiold and Christian Krohg were the leaders of the movement. Krohg, however, afterwards struck out a path for himself, creating a social art of high propagandistic value.

The painters of the 1890's hoisted new signals once more: Norwegian neo-romanticism and French impressionism. Among the romanticists, Halfdan Egedius and Nikolai Astrup were artists of the highest rank; the works of Harald Sohlberg will probably also survive, thanks to their original technique of colouring. But these three artists were too individualistic to found a school. Another neo-romanticist, however, Gerhard Munthe, succeeded in creating a new national style of painting which has exercised great influence, even on handicraft. He transferred the decorative and ornamental ideas of Norwegian medieval art to the technique of modern painting, creating expressions of rhythmic movements in stylized reproduction. Gerhard Munthe has his artistic roots in the Norwegian mind of the bronze age.

Extremely modern, on the other hand, was the last of the painters who won renown in the 1890's: Edvard Munch. He was the typical expressionist, always seeking to transfer his own fears, instincts, desires and impulses to the canvas. He has said: "Painting is for me a disease and a drug. A disease

of which I cannot be cured. A drug which I cannot do without." His portraits give us an intensive visualising of soul conditions. With full justification he once remarked: "I do not fear photography as long as it cannot be used in heaven and hell."

Norwegian painters are still very little known in England; it may be taken as typical that the few lines on modern Norwegian painting in the last edition of *Encyclopædia Britannica* display the deepest possible ignorance.

Norwegian science and knowledge, as part of world history, commences with the foundation of the University in 1811, and their results should be valued against the background of the short traditions of one and one-third of a century.

The first illustrious name is that of Niels Henrik Abel, who, in 1825, revolutionised the theory of elliptic functions, and whose contributions to pure mathematics might have been unparalleled if death had not interrupted his indefatigable researches at an age of only twenty-seven. Also, later in the century, Norwegian mathematicians gave important contributions to science; Cato Maximilian Guldberg, Sophus Lie and Peter Ludvig Sylow may be mentioned.

In 1819 Christopher Hansteen published a fundamental work on terrestrial magnetism. Among later Norse physicists was Kristian Birkeland, who, in 1895, wrote a famous treatise on the Maxwell equations, and later founded the systematical research on the northern lights. Based on magnetic experiments he developed, also, a cosmogonic theory which has been overlooked in a rather strange way. In our century Vilhelm Bjerknes and his pupils have laid a completely new foundation for meteorology.

The greatest name of Norwegian medicine is that of Armauer Hansen, who, in 1873, discovered the bacillus of leprosy. In the XXth century Norwegian physicians have given important contributions to the vitamin research.

It was the Arctic expeditions which gave the incitements to Norwegian experiments concerning nutrition. Fridtjof Nansen stands out as the great pioneer. In 1888 he accomplished the first crossing of the massive ice-fields of interior Green-

land, using skis as means of conveyance. His polar expedition from 1893–96 became the model of all later Arctic and Antarctic research. Later, he contributed greatly to the development of oceanography. Among Norwegians his most famous successor in polar exploration was Roald Amundsen, who, in 1905, aboard the *Gjöa*, a little sloop of forty-seven tons, led an expedition through the North-West Passage, and fixed the position of the magnetic pole. In 1911 he was the first to reach the South Pole; but this expedition was undertaken in a somewhat disloyal competition with Robert Falcon Scott, and added more to Amundsen's fame than to his popularity.

Roald Amundsen's expedition to the South Pole gave some of the few dramatic moments in Norway's history between 1905 and 1914. On the whole, these years were quiet. But the importance of a period cannot be judged by its dramatic effects. Decisive must be the evolutionary valuation. And those nine years added more to the economic and social development of the country than several earlier centuries. The results can easily be seen in statistics. Everyone was aware of the progress. The epoch from 1904 to 1914 is the happiest decade in Norway's history. No wonder that the whole Norwegian people, when, in 1914, they celebrated the centenary of their Constitution, were penetrated by an almost religious belief in progress.

Three new features gave special colours to the epoch.

Firstly, electricity brought a new age to Norwegian homes and industry. Owing to her abundance in water-power, Norway was suddenly given means for a considerable augmentation of her standard of living, as well as of her industrial potentialities. Not least important was the fact that the modern methods of dam construction made it possible to utilise the very high waterfalls. Norwegians became pioneers in the art of harnessing water-power; our dam constructions and hydro-electric power plants were the "last word" in that field of engineering. Unhappily, a restrictive legislation retarded the development after 1909.

Secondly, the Labour movement acquired a high position of influence, although the official party only obtained a small

number of seats in the Storthing. The movement itself dated back to the revolutionary year of 1848, when a young teacher and journalist, Marcus Thrane, organised a number of Labour associations, and formulated a programme of radical reforms. But incautious utterances from some of his followers at a meeting in 1851 made possible a criminal suit against the Labour leaders of the time, and they were all sentenced to jail. Thrane for four years—doubtless the most unjust sentence ever pronounced by a Norwegian tribunal. After his confinement Thrane emigrated to America, and a vigorous Labour movement did not reappear until the 1880's. Then the Norwegian Labour Party was founded; the formal start took place in August, 1887. In the years between 1905 and 1914 the young generations within the party led a revolutionary propaganda, partly inspired by syndicalistic ideas. But words were not followed by action.

Thirdly, Norwegian women were given the same civic and political rights as men. Since 1882 women had been admitted to the university, in 1885 Gina Krog had founded the first woman suffrage union, in 1898 Frederikke Marie Qvam had organised a national union for the same purpose, and in 1901 the Norwegian women had obtained limited municipal suffrage. The years between 1905 and 1914 brought the final victory of the women's movement. In 1907 Norway, as the first sovereign State in the world, granted women political suffrage; in 1910 their municipal and in 1913 their political suffrage was made universal. The Norwegian women won all these victories without any serious struggle. They were given their equality rights in the name of justice.

XII

NORWAY IN THE MODERN WORLD CONFLICTS

At the outbreak of the First World War, in 1914, many Norwegians feared that Norway and Sweden would be thrown against each other in open hostilities. Only nine years had elapsed since 1905. No intervening events had revealed the real Swedish sentiments towards Norway. On the other hand, it was well known that not only the officers and high finance in Sweden nourished great sympathies for Germany, but even that the more anonymous part of the Swedish people cherished an orientation to the south, whilst the overwhelming majority of the Norwegians whole-heartedly sided with Great Britain and France.

But as early as on the 29th of July, 1914, three days before the German invasion of France, the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Knut Wallenberg, approached the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Mr. Ihlen, suggesting an agreement to the effect that, whatever happened, Norwegians and Swedes "should not shoot at each other." He received an affirmative reply, and on the 8th of August the Swedish-Norwegian entente of peace was sealed.

The Scandinavian co-operation thus initiated, was later extended to comprise Denmark also. Two meetings of the three Nordic Kings—at Malmö, in December, 1914, and at Christiania in November, 1917—accentuated the parallel neutrality policies of their countries. All in all, the collaboration proved to be a success, probably because it was carried out in completely free forms.

But there is no doubt that, even within the loose framework of this informal collaboration, Norway had sometimes to follow suit against her own interests and desires. The Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Hjalmar Hammarskjöld, was an expert in International Law. He proposed launching sharp protests against every infringement of Nordic neutrality, and he loved using the same strong language, whether the violation was

severe or only "technical." Although the Norwegians succeeded in tempering many of the harsh expressions in his drafts for notes to the Allies, Mr. Ihlen reluctantly gave his signature to several protests which he found unnecessarily provoking.

The fact was that whilst the British and French infringements of Norwegian neutrality mostly consisted in unilateral alterations of the international contraband rules, the Germans sank peaceful Norwegian merchantmen, generally without any examination of their load, and often without warning. During the early autumn of 1916 German submarines even opened an undeclared war against Norwegian cargo ships in Arctic waters, making an effort to stop our trade with Russia.

For this severe procedure the Germans had a special reason, for, on the 5th of August, 1916, the Norwegian Government had concluded a secret agreement with Great Britain, which, in its effects, was most detrimental to German interests, as it restricted the export of Norwegian fish to Germany to a maximum of 15 per cent of the actual catch. The sinkings in the Arctic occasioned, however, a Norwegian counter-measure: by Royal Decree of October the 13th, 1916, belligerent submarines were denied access to Norwegian territorial waters. Thanks to some "corrections" made at the very last moment, the decree received a rather clumsy form. The Germans were infuriated. Their Press opened a nerve war against Norway. On the 20th of October the German Government demanded that the prohibitive decree should be withdrawn. Their Note differed from an ultimatum only in one point: no time limit was fixed for the receipt of reply.

Mr. Ihlen made the most of this omission. He delayed his answer for weeks. Meanwhile he secured promises of assistance from the Allies, to be given immediately if Norway was attacked. But he was informed that the Allied Governments preferred the evasion of a German-Norwegian war. In all secrecy he then promised the Germans some slight commercial concessions. When he took up the main matter, he succeeded in obtaining German acceptance of a new wording of the decree, which in fact was nothing more than bringing it

back to the form originally proposed by the Norwegian commander-in-chief of the Navy, Admiral Dawes. On the 9th of February, 1917, the German Government declared that the incident was settled. Modern Norway had won her greatest diplomatic victory.

Some months later the Germans suffered a new diplomatic defeat in their relation to Norway. Some Norwegian ships sailing from ports in the homeland became the victims of mysterious explosions. The Christiania police thought it probable that bombs had been smuggled under the cover of diplomatic seals, and placed aboard the ships by foreign labourers assisting in Norwegian harbours. Mr. Otto Blehr, the Minister of Justice, gave orders to open the next big trunks arriving as courier luggage to the German legation of Christiania. He warned the German Minister, but no Germans dared to appear when the seals were broken. The police discovered 211 high explosive bombs and 649 incendiaries of various camouflaged kinds. In a Note of July the 9th, 1917, the German Government had to make the most humiliating apologies.

Meanwhile, the losses of the Norwegian mercantile marine had not abated. On the contrary, they reached their peak during the spring of 1917. This was due to the German opening of "unrestricted submarine warfare" from the 1st of February that year. Whilst the American, Danish and Dutch shipowners ceased, at first, to sail to the British Isles immediately after the German declaration, the Norwegians continued; Ernest Fayle, in his official British publication on the war, has given a number of statistical data to prove the effectiveness of this Norwegian attitude. But the resultant loss of Norwegian ships was appalling. The loss in world tonnage for March shows a grand total of 590,545 tons; 106,111 tons fell on Norway. For April the figures were 866,610 and 102,312 tons respectively. The Norwegian war losses amounted, all in all, to 829 ships of 1,239,283 register tons sunk, plus sixty-seven ships of 60,380 tons disappeared; 1,162 Norwegian sailors met their death by German acts of war, whilst 943 were aboard the sixty-seven ships that were heard of no more. In relation to the tonnage in 1914, Norway lost 49·3 per cent of

her mercantile marine through German action. The corresponding percentage was 39·2 for France and 37·6 for Great Britain. After the war, Norway did not receive any compensation, support, or facilities for the reconstruction of her mercantile marine. By her own efforts alone she had to restore her former position in shipping.

But the war economy of Norway was generally misunderstood. All those people who base their estimation on values in exchange regarded her as a country that had suddenly become rich. But what are riches? War-time Norway was rich in money, but poor in wealth. For a while her shipowners and exporters received high freights and high prices. During the war they were, however, impeded from buying what they needed, as Norway's import was rationed. When, at last, they were allowed to buy, they met with the inflated prices of the after-war boom, and before their ships had been replaced, their stocks replenished and their factories refitted, the after-war boom had collapsed, and the slump of the early 1920's was a grim reality. It is a theoretical enigma that so many writers on business cycles quite guilelessly reckon high-price periods in war times as years of "prosperity." Such writers have not been able to look behind the "monetary veil."

In the case of Norway after 1915, this "monetary veil" became particularly thick, as a heavy inflation marched hand-in-hand with scarcity in commodities. The circulation of bank-notes was quadrupled. Prices and cost of living rose correspondingly. Bank deposits swelled, but the decrease in productive potentialities induced the bankers to lend money to hazardous enterprises or mere speculation in changing capital values. When the war ended, a great bank crisis was imminent. Its outburst and protracted development gave a melancholic tinge to Norwegian economic history throughout the 1920's.

A firm and consequent exchange policy by the bank of issue might have averted many of the misfortunes brought about through the war difficulties and the subsequent inflation. But after the departure from the gold standard in August, 1914, the policy of the Bank of Norway was conducted with more opportunism than theoretical insight. In

the years 1915 to 1917, the krone achieved a high international value; thus, the pound sterling sank from a parity of kr. 18·17 to kr. 12·90, quoted on the 3rd of November, 1917; the dollar, having a par value of kr. 3·73, was the same day sold at kr. 2·79. Then the tide turned. On the 13th of October, 1921, the pound reached a quotation of kr. 31·75, the dollar of kr. 8·28. In the years that followed, the Norwegian krone became a plaything of international speculation. The theoretical economists demanded stabilisation. They could stress that almost all economic interests would profit by devaluation. But vanity and romanticism desired re-establishment of the old parities. The economists lost the battle. From the 1st of May, 1928, the Bank of Norway had to resume gold redemption at the old par.

The result was a heavy crisis of deflation. Banks went bankrupt, municipalities had to make arrangements with their creditors, taxation reached dangerous heights, the peasants were forced to mortgage their farms up to fantastic percentages, and more than 100,000 labourers lost their employment. Only the foreign speculators profited. But their gain was big.

Norwegian internal politics were, most naturally, deeply influenced by the deflation crisis. The two old parties, the Left and the Right, who alternately had been in power, and whose leaders were responsible for the mismanagement of monetary policy, suffered heavy losses at the general elections. A newly-founded Peasant Party obtained a number of seats, whilst the Labour Party emerged as the largest Parliamentary group. Differing in general social outlook and final political ideas, these two parties had, nevertheless, common interests to look after during the economic troubles, and when Mr. Johan Nygaardsvold, in March, 1935, formed a Labour Cabinet, he enjoyed sufficient Parliamentary support from the peasant representatives of the Storthing.

Meanwhile, the world crisis, which commenced with the collapse of the American stock market in the autumn of 1929, spread to all capitalistic countries. But, thanks to the deflation, Norwegian production and trade had been forced to adopt a cautious and almost passive policy in the dangerous

years between 1925 and 1929, and there did not exist national causes for a new set back. As a consequence, Norway suffered only indirectly from the great world depression of the early 1930's. Nay, in the end she even profited by it: when Great Britain, on the 20th September, 1931, abandoned the gold parity, Norway followed suit only a week after, thus escaping from a monetary position which had proved to be detrimental to her vital interests. At the suggestion from theoretical quarters, the Norwegian krone, from 1933 to 1939, was factually, though not legally, stabilised in relation to sterling, equality being maintained between the Norwegian monetary unit and the British shilling. During the epoch of the "shilling-krone," Norwegian production and trade entered a new period of progress which, however, did not become manifest until 1936 or 1937. Agriculture and small industry, in particular, expanded, and reached a higher economic and technical level than ever before. Norwegian standard of living surpassed that of most other countries. The nation began, also, to pay off the foreign debts which she had incurred during the 1920's.

Norwegian shipping and whaling, being more or less international trades, did not suffer seriously from the deflation policy of the 1920's. Their great expansion began as early as in 1923. That year Norway was only number eight of seafaring nations. But at the outbreak of the Second World War she had regained the fourth place. According to Lloyd's Register, Norway possessed, in June, 1939, a tonnage of 4·8 million; her number of ships amounted to 4,391. Her greatest importance in world transport lay in her tankers. Ahead of her in this trade was only the British Empire with 3·2 millions registered tons and the United States with 2·8 millions; Norway figured with 2.1 millions. In whaling Norway continued to be the leading country. From 1923 pelagic catching was introduced, resulting in an enormous increase of output.

Norway's greater economic strength in the 1930's enabled her to resume the realisation of social reforms. An Act of 1919 had introduced the eight-hour day in industrial production, and reduced the maximum weekly hours to forty-eight;

a special Act prescribed the same regulation of working hours for shipping, with the addition that seamen labouring on shore in tropical harbours should enjoy a maximum day of seven hours. But from 1919 to 1936 social reform work was almost completely neglected. To Mr. Nygaardsvold's Government fell the honour of reviving labour legislation. Loyally supported by the opposition parties, it succeeded in having adopted by the Storthing three important social laws: the Labour Protection Act of 1936, the Old Age Pension Act of the same year, and the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1938. Thanks to this new advance, Norway was, at the outbreak of the Second World War, once more in the front line of social reform.

The economic difficulties of the deflation period did not only stop the progress of social reform for a considerable time. They offer also one of the two main excuses for the imprudent neglect of national defence which characterised the decade after 1925, the other excuse being the general belief in a lasting peace.

Norway entered the League of Nations in 1920, and took, ever since, faithful part in the work of the League as well as in that of the International Labour Office. Although, or because, the masses of the people were not very interested in foreign politics, nearly everyone realised the importance of the new organisations—and over-estimated what the League could do to maintain peace; the great harm which Geneva actually did to democratic nations was to excite deceptive hopes and debilitate the natural instincts of fear.

But Norway succeeded in doing much useful work within the League. In the 1920's this was due mostly to the practical idealism and inspired efforts of one man: Fridtjof Nansen.

This great explorer entered international work in 1918 as president of the newly-founded Norwegian League of Nations Union. During the peace conference of Paris, in the spring of 1919, he was a spokesman for the rights of the small nations. But he fought also for a personal policy, trying to persuade the leaders of the conference to "leave Russia alone," and abstain from any intervention in Russian politics, arguing that this

great people had a right to decide for herself. He spoke to deaf ears: the Western Powers made the capital blunder of supporting the "white" armies against the victorious Bolshevists.—On the 11th of April, 1920, the Council of the League of Nations resolved to organise the repatriation of prisoners of war still left in enemy territories, most of them in Russia. Nansen was asked to lead the work as High Commissioner. In eighteen months he succeeded in bringing home 380,000.—In 1921 the Council resolved to help the Russian fugitives; it was calculated that after the revolution one and a half million of them were scattered all over the world. Nansen was appointed High Commissioner once more. For this work several years were needed, and it had not been finished when Nansen died, in 1930. But at that time he had found new homes for about a million of the unhappy refugees.—When, in 1921, the great Russian famine occurred, the International Red Cross asked Nansen to organise an action of support. He accepted this task also. But governments and officials tried to thwart his efforts, blinded by incredible political fanaticism. Through direct appeals to the peoples Nansen had to rise the necessary funds. But he got the response and organised the help. His representative in Moscow, Mr. Gorwin, has calculated that he saved the lives of 6,400,000 children and 400,000 adults.—During his work Nansen realised the sometimes insurmountable difficulties which encountered those fugitives who were without papers of legitimation. He had, therefore, called an international conference to deal with this question; it met in Geneva, July, 1922. The conference agreed that Nansen should be entitled to issue his own passports. Fifty-two Governments pledged themselves to recognise their validity. Nansen was no longer only a man, he was a State also: the State of the State-less.—Only some months after the fugitive conference of Geneva, Nansen received once more a call to act as the leader of an international action of support. The Greeks had been beaten by the Turks. Populations were in flight. Nansen then conceived a bold idea: he proposed to the two Governments to undertake an exchange of populations, transferring Greeks from Asia Minor to Greece and Turks from Greece to Asia Minor. Through his

marvellous power of persuasion he succeeded in having his plan adopted. Under Nansen's supervision more than a million Greeks came home from Asia, whilst half a million Turks joined their compatriots in Kemal Pasha's new republic. Through this measure Nansen did not only solve the immediate problem, but laid also foundations of a better relation between the two countries.

The changing Norwegian Governments always left Nansen a free hand in Geneva. On the whole, it is only just to state that Norway, in her policy within the League of Nations, tried to promote true internationalism.

Even outside the League, Norway made contributions to democratic co-operation. Thus, as a protest against the chauvinistic economic policy adopted by most countries after the crisis of 1929, Norway took the initiative for an agreement in favour of somewhat more liberalistic principles in foreign trade, which was concluded between herself, Belgium and Luxembourg, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. At the invitation of the then Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Johan Ludwig Mowinckel, the convention was concluded in Oslo on the 22nd of December, 1930, and the signatories were generally called the "Oslo States;" in 1933 Finland joined the group.

Besides the line of international co-operation, we may discern two other main trends in Norwegian foreign policy between the two great wars: one Arctic and one a line of neutrality.

The Arctic line originated at the Peace Conference of 1919. Fritz Wedel, then Norwegian Minister to Paris, suggested to the leading allied statesmen that Norway, as a recompense for the great services she had rendered to the Allies during the war, should be allowed to acquire sovereignty rights over the Spitsbergen Isles, which were still no man's land. He found powerful support for this idea, and on the 9th of February, 1920, the Spitsbergen treaty was concluded in Paris between the United States, Great Britain, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, Norway, the Netherlands and Spain. The High Contracting Parties recognised Norwegian sovereignty over

the whole Spitsbergen archipelago, inclusive of Beeren-Eiland. All other interested powers, among them the Soviet Union, have later adhered to the treaty. The isles were taken over by Norway on the 14th of August, 1925. Since then Norway has further enlarged her territory by occupations in the Arctic and the Antarctic: in 1929 she occupied Jan Mayen, in 1930 the Bouvet Island, and in 1931 Peter I's Island. But efforts made by a Peasant Party Government to obtain international recognition of occupations in Greenland did not meet with success; the Norwegian contention was that the uninhabited parts of that vast continent should be regarded as no man's land. However, the Permanent Court of International Justice overruled the occupation; the judgment was given on April the 5th, 1933, with twelve votes against two.

The neutrality line lay in continuation of the policy during the war between 1914 and 1918. It was revealed in Geneva through Norway's continuous unwillingness to take upon herself greater obligations than stipulated in the Covenant, and became conspicuous once more through the position Norway adopted during the initial months of the Second World War. This neutrality was, however, only one of action, or rather non-action, as the overwhelming majority of the Norwegian people openly showed how deeply they despised and abhorred Nazism. A retired officer, Mr. Vidkunn Quisling, tried, in the 1930's, to launch a Norwegian Nazi movement, but with small success; his party, which adopted the parodic name "National Unity," did not obtain a single seat in the Storthing.

Whilst both the economic and the political fate of Norway after 1914 have been decided by world history to a greater extent than ever before, Norwegian literature in these three decades has assumed a still more national character.

To a certain extent this literary trend is a correlative phenomenon to the continuous linguistic struggle between the two languages of the country. The country-language (the *landsmaal*) possesses, since 1884, formal equality with the traditional literary language, which is now called the "realm-language" (the *riksmaal*), and the use of the country-language had, for political reasons, often been directly encouraged by

the authorities. But still the overwhelming number of publications and almost all leading newspapers appear in the "realm-language." This latter idiom is now in a rapid development. Reforms of 1907, 1917 and 1938 corrected its spelling in accordance with a purely Norwegian system of phonetics, did away with Danish forms that had intruded during the years of union, and adopted a number of words and expressions from the dialects. Simultaneously, modern authors who use the country-language, drop more and more of the archaic framework set up by Ivar Aasen. To-day the two languages lie pretty near to each other. Both are now national in spirit and truth, only expressing different sides and shades of Norwegian culture.

As a part of the "norwegising" evolution, a great many place-names, "danified" during the union, have had to give way to the original Norwegian appellations. Thus, in 1924, the name of the capital was restored to "Oslo."

Strange to say, the country-language has, in the XXth century, only produced two authors of first rank: the novelist Olav Duun, who, in his mighty cycle *Juvikings*, gave us the saga of the Norwegian peasant, and Olav Aukrust, the Wergeland of modern Norse lyrics.

The realm-language of the XXth century, on the other hand, possesses an almost overcrowded Parnassus.

Three generations of lyrists have expressed themselves in this idiom, each of them giving immortal contributions to Norwegian literature. Among the poets who published their first volumes before 1905, three stand pre-eminent: Vilhelm Krag, Nils Collet Vogt and Knut Hamsun. Between 1905 and 1914, again, three poets of high rank made their débuts: Herman Wildenvey, Olaf Bull and Arnulf Överland. A selection of Wildenvey's poems have been translated into English by Joseph Auslander; with an allusion to the old adage by Aristophanes, Wildenvey gave them the title *Owls to Athens*. Överland is the fighter of his generation, a dauntless fighter for truth and justice. Fighters are also the two most prominent representatives of the youth: Nordahl Grieg and Gunnar Reis Andersen. During the present war Nordahl Grieg even accompanied the fighting forces, just like the medieval skalds,

exposing himself only too boldly; he was killed in a raid over Berlin on the 2nd of December, 1943. In the autumn of 1940 he greeted bombed London in powerful stanzas.

Among the modern novelists of the realm-language, three have won world-fame: Knut Hamsun, Johan Bojer and Sigrid Undset. To Norwegian history, Sigrid Undset is the most important, because she has re-created the characters of our medieval times and revealed their inner life to us. Less known outside Norway is a fourth great narrator: Johan Falkberget, who has written the prose epos of the Norwegian miner.

Like literature, painting continues to flourish in modern Norway. We can distinguish between two different periods: in the two first decades of this century, colour dominated over line; in the 1930's, on the other hand, line-drawing appeared again as an essential, whilst the artists sometimes completely subordinated colour to composition, giving the whole picture a certain shade in order to serve the idea. Such methods reveal a tendency towards monumental art. Happily, the potentialities of the new style were discovered by builders and architects, who confided important decorative tasks to the leading painters. The most exquisite and most typical expressions of Norwegian painting in the 1930's are to be found in frescoes of big dimensions, embellishing public buildings.

Per Krohg's Ragnarokk fresco, on the stairway wall of the University Library of Oslo, is the masterpiece of the time. He has painted the prophecy of the *volve* in the old Edda lay, as it could be visualised in 1933. Transferred to grim modern realities we see

> axe-time, sword-time shields cleaving,
> wind-time, wolf-time, ere the world crumbles.

Through the centre of the painting a long row of tanks roll towards the foreground; in each open turret a steel-clad warrior laughs triumphantly, proud of his power; he is the modern centaur: half man, half machine. Over their heads

aeroplanes race through the sky. One line of the prophecy is reversed in the painting: here

flames leap down from heaven itself.

What Per Krohg has depicted, is the man-made Ragnarokk.

Would it come? Every one who stopped to look at the fresco in the seven years after 1933, had to wonder.

Ragnarokk *did* come. In the night between the 8th and 9th of April, 1940, German fleets attacked all main ports of Norway. The assault was directed in the midst of peace, without foregoing conflict, without declaration of war, without ultimatum, without any warning at all. Apparently, the Germans felt certain that their surprise raid would meet no resistance at all. They were mistaken. The patrol ships of the Norwegian navy were on their duty that night as always. A small armed whale-catcher, *Pol III*, being on her watch in the offing of the Oslo Fjord, fired the first shot with her single gun. She met with devastating return fire. Her gun was smashed, and her commander had both his legs shot off; he rolled himself overboard. But the firing had warned the forts of Rauer and Bolerne, and when the garrisons observed the high stems of dark cruisers on their course northwards, they opened fire. Some hours later the Norwegian battleship *Eidsvoll*, cruising in a heavy snowstorm outside the harbour of Narvik, was suddenly faced by a foreign fleet. A parlementaire asked to be taken on board. In the name of the German navy he claimed surrender. It was refused. When he left, he gave a signal with his torch, and the German guns immediately sent a salvo at close quarters, leaving no chance to *Eidsvoll*. But her sister ship, *Norway*, lying near the big ore quay in the harbour, accepted the challenge, and went down only after a heavy fight, her flag flying and her guns firing. In this engagement the Germans had one destroyer sunk and one seriously damaged.

They were to suffer heavier losses in the morning. At Horten two disembarking German ships were sunk and the cruiser *Emden* put out of action. The fortress Oscarsborg

sank the 10,000 tons cruiser *Blücher* and set on fire the gunnery ship *Brummer*. Outside Odderöy, the fortress of Christianssand, the cruiser *Karlsruhe* was heavily damaged by the fire from the Norwegian batteries, and sunk by a Polish submarine when returning from the attack; the Germans later succeeded in entering the port by flying the French colours. At Bergen the 6,000 tons cruiser *Königsberg* was put out of action, and sunk next day by British bombers of the Fleet Air Arm, whilst entering the Trondheim Fjord one German destroyer was so badly damaged that she had to be beached.

German propaganda, supported by some guileless neutrals, have told the story that the attack on Norway was launched as a counter-measure because the British Navy, on the 8th of April, in spite of Norwegian protests, had laid some mines in the northern part of our fairway, within undisputed Norwegian territorial waters. But everyone who is able to think will have to observe the fact that an attack of such precision as the German raid on Norway needs long and careful preparation. We can, also, deduce from our knowledge of distances, that when the British mines were laid the German naval units were on their way to their respective areas of operation, where every one of them arrived at zero hour. Finally, near Oscarsborg, Norwegians have found a copy of the German order of attack, orginating from the sunk *Blücher*. It is dated the 9th of March, weeks before the British mine-laying plan was conceived.

At 3.30 in the morning of the 9th of April the Norwegian Government had received reports about the opening of hostilities. At 5 a.m. the German Minister delivered a number of unacceptable demands. At 7.30 a.m. a special train left the Great Eastern Station of Oslo with King, Government and Storthing; on their way the passengers witnessed the air bombing of Kjeller aerodrome. In the evening the Storthing, at a last meeting at Elverum under the inspiring presidency of Mr. Carl Joachim Hambro, gave full powers to the Government. On the 10th King Haakon rejected humiliating proposals from the German Minister who had come to negotiate. In his war proclamation, issued three days later, the King remarked: "Our position is such, to-day, that I

cannot tell you where in Norway I myself, the Crown Prince, and the Government reside, as the German air force launched a violent attack against us when we had taken refuge in a small undefended and unprotected place. High explosives, incendiaries and machine guns were used against us and the civilian population in the most unscrupulous and callous way. The purpose of these attacks was obvious: at once to annihilate all of us who were assembled in order to solve the problems of the nation."

Meanwhile the order for general mobilisation had been given over the wireless. But the Germans bombed the meeting-places from the air, most of the Norwegian artillery was forced to cross the Swedish frontier, and the newly-appointed commander-in-chief, General Ruge, could only raise improvised battalions, equipped, for the greater part, with infantry rifles only. British, French and Polish troops were landed to support the resistance. But they were insufficient in number, and efforts to give them air cover were thwarted by the Germans. Before the end of April southern Norway had to be given up. The plan was to defend northern Norway. Tromsö enjoyed the privilege of becoming the capital of the country, and the seat of the central bank. Narvik, having been lost on the 9th of April, was retaken by storm; here the 6th division, under command of General Fleischer, fought with skill and bravery side by side with French and Polish troops; the engagement of Narvik was the first action which the German army lost during the Second World War. But the fate of Norway was decided on foreign battle-fields. After the French defeats north-west of the Maginot Line, the British Government decided to "concentrate forces" and ordered evacuation. The Norwegian troops, having used their last round of ammunition, had to demobilise. General Ruge surrendered. In the afternoon of June 7th, King Haakon, the Government and their officials left Tromsö on board the British cruiser *Devonshire*. Three days later they arrived in London.

In Oslo, Mr. Quisling set up a sort of rebellious Government on the 9th of April. But the opposition against him was so strong that the German High Command let him down after

some few days. The Supreme Court, being the only "power in the State" left in the capital, regarded it as its constitutional right and duty to appoint an Administrative Council, charged with the executive power in allegiance to the laws. This step was taken on the 15th of April. The day after, the Supreme Court informed the King of the appointment, and on the 16th the Government announced their approval. As long as the fight continued in northern Norway, the Administrative Council carried on without great difficulties. But from the middle of June a heavy German pressure was brought upon the members of the Storthing in order to obtain the deposition of King Haakon. Some Norwegian politicians were weak, and negotiated with the occupation authorities, but it soon became clear that the only intention of the Germans was to trap the Norwegians by false promises, and nothing came of their evil plot. Then, on the 25th of September, 1940, the German Chief Commissioner broke off the negotiations and dismissed the Administrative Council. "National Unity" was proclaimed the "State Party," and thirteen "acting Councillors of State" were appointed with German mandate to nazify Norway.

They did not succeed. A stern and stiff resistance was put up, to a great extent by the national organisations of economic or social character.

The Supreme Court claimed the testing of the validity, according to International Law, of such decrees as were issued by the "acting Councillors," or the German occupation authorities. This being refused, the whole court resigned on the 12th of December, 1940. Throughout the whole of 1941 the lead given by the Supreme Court was followed by other organisations.

On February 1st, 1942, Quisling was appointed "Minister-President." His first attempt to force Nazism on the Norwegians was directed against the teachers. They were asked to join the Nazi Teachers' Association. When nearly all of them refused, 1,300 teachers were arrested, and most of them received harsh treatment. But all efforts to break down their resistance failed utterly. More than 200,000 parents sent written protests to the Ministry of Education. Still more

important to the teachers was the support given to them by their pupils, for there exists in Norway a children's front, firm and unbreakable, governed by the unwritten laws of patriotism and comradeship, a children's front which is a pledge of Norway's future.

The opposition of the clergy has been as strong as that of the teachers. In 1941 not less than 1,100 clergymen out of 1,137 resigned, refusing to serve the nazified traitor administration. Just as the teachers were supported by their pupils, the clergymen received the whole-hearted backing of their congregations. Since the beginning of the XIXth century, when a layman, Hans Nielsen Hauge, initiated a strong religious revival, the Norwegian Church had not often been brought to the fore of public interest, and sceptics doubted the depth and sincerity of the Christian mind in Norway. But during the occupation the zeal and ardour of religious feelings among the population were revealed, and even the silliest and most superficial specimens of Nazi brood had to realise that Christendom in Norway inflicted a serious defeat on the worshippers of Hitler.

The labourers are also taking an active part in the foremost rank of resistance. The two first civilians shot after illegal prosecution, had been organisers of the labourers' front: Viggo Hansteen and Rolf Wickström. Later, many of the German victims have belonged to the labourers or have been in collaboration with them, thus giving us the proof of martyrdom for the patriotism of the labour class.

While the manuscript of this book was being written, the Germans have tried to nazify the University. Neither professors nor students would accept "the new order." The Germans then closed the University and arrested all students they could get hold of; 650 of them were soon after deported to Germany.

The "home front" has put up that sort of fight which pre-war terminology called "passive resistance." This expression is misleading. The "home-fronters" in Norway have, time and again, taken active steps. But, of course, strategically they are on the defensive. They ward off the German attacks against Norwegian culture and life, whilst waiting for

liberation by armed forces. The Norwegian "external front" is, therefore, a necessary and indispensable connecting link between the lonely home-fronters and our mighty allies. Moreover, it is thanks to the King, the Government, their administration and their forces that Norway, during the Second World War, is not only an occupied country, but also one of the belligerent United Nations, rendering her contribution to the common war efforts, and able to let her voice speak in the discussions of the future world.

The headquarters of the Norwegian external front are in London. Round the Norwegian Government here a "little Norway" has come into existence, a guest State, with her public offices and committees, her Central Bank, her shipping management ("Nortraship"), her Church, her institutes and clubs, her hospitals and her hotels, her Press, her Supreme Maritime Court and the High Commands of her Fighting Forces. This external Norwegian State is completely self-sustained; it has a budget of its own, and has taken over the debt service of all the country's foreign public loans. The Norwegian Air Force has joined the flying armada of Great Britain in the continuous fight against the "Luftwaffe." Meanwhile, a new Norwegian army is training and preparing in Scotland, waiting to play its part in an eventual invasion of Norway as a spearhead of local experts. And more than sixty Norwegian naval ships sail the seven seas, protecting convoys, sweeping mines, reconnoitring and watching,—sometimes also firing their guns and torpedoes in major operations. Thus, in the naval battle off the North Cape on December 26th, 1943, the Norwegian destroyer *Stord* went close to the German battleship *Scharnhorst*, sending her some of the final salvos she received before she went down into the icy Arctic water.

But the greatest contribution rendered by Norway to the cause of the United Nations is the service of her ocean-going merchantmen. On the day of the invasion more than 800 Norwegian ships were on the high sea. Through the wireless they received two opposite appeals: Quisling asked them to return home or to report at the nearest neutral harbour, our improvised shipping headquarters in London to sail for Allied

ports. Every one of the captains responded to the call from London. The whole Norwegian fleet went in for our common war effort. She suffered tremendous losses, but she fulfilled her duties. In many months, more than 40 per cent of all petrol to Great Britain was carried in Norwegian tankers. During the critical year of 1941, the United Nations might easily have lost the battle of the Atlantic if they had been without the powerful Norwegian mercantile marine.

XIII

NORWAY IN THE WORLD OF TO-MORROW

This little book endeavours to tell, in a concentrated form, the story of Norway from the glacial epoch to the end of 1943, written with a special view to her place in world history. It sums up the saga of a people which has been a separate nation since the palaeolithic time, and of a kingdom which is 999 years older than the German Reich. Its main thesis is, that if any country in the world has the historic right to be "a free, independent, indivisible and inalienable kingdom," then it is Norway.

In the last three years we have witnessed a great number of ambitious brains drafting schemes for a new world. Professors, politicians and professional busybodies: all wish to make their contributions. Everyone finds it simply delightful to plan for others. We live in the epoch of easy and cheap planning. It is a commonplace experience to-day to see people who do not understand how to read a map, eagerly drawing new borderlines. Some of those well-meaning and ignorant schemers have found it opportune to visualise new Nordic unions, probably being unaware of the tragic fact that such unions were tried for 586 years with most unsatisfactory results. If they knew only the outlines of Norway's history, they would realise that no sane Norwegian could ever dream of seeing his country enter such a union anew.

Now I fancy that the schemers might answer: "Well, history is history, but conditions to-day are different." Oh yes, very different. The political basis for a Nordic union has never been so weak and so incompatible as to-day. What happens during the Second World War will be of lasting importance. Recent and present events have united some nations and disunited others. They have dispersed the political unity of the "North." Finland joined the German tyrants and aggressors in their evil attack on the Soviet Union. Sweden kept a formal and opportunistic neutrality, allowing German

troops transit through her territory for more than three years. Denmark did not oppose the German invasion of April, 1940, but revolted bravely against the oppression in August, 1943, thus reviving her proud traditions from 1848 and 1864. Iceland, a separate State since 1918, has been occupied by forces of the United Nations, consenting to this measure, but doing so without joining the alliance. Norway, finally, had her territory up to the North Cape conquered by the Germans in a two months campaign, but continues the war as one of the United Nations, using all her available power for the common Allied cause. Conclusion in a nutshell: five separate States—five different policies.

Norway has, also, a special and most serious reason for opposing a new Nordic union. Sweden, being the most populous of the five countries, and enjoying the less exposed geographical position, would easily win a type of dominance within the confederation. But the Swedes still fear the Russians, and admit openly that they would regard a "strong North" as a "bulwark" against the Soviets; they can never forget their many wars against Russia. Norway, on the other hand, has from time immemorial maintained good neighbourly relations with Russia; she wishes to develop her connections with the Soviets further, and must absolutely refuse to take part in a constellation which, with more or less right, might be conceived as representing a would-be opposition to the Russian people. Friendship with Russia is a main thesis in Norwegian foreign policy.

These statements should not be read as indicating any unfriendly feelings towards the Swedes or any one of the other Nordic nations. On the contrary, the Norwegians wish to strengthen the inter-Nordic ties of friendship, and to extend the Nordic collaboration in all non-political matters. We feel the deepest sympathy for the resistant Danes, and are most grateful for the strong expressions of brotherly affections which so often reach us from many quarters of the Danish and Swedish peoples. Norwegian troops have, during the war, been stationed in Iceland, and our people has felt great satisfaction in this unexpected renewal of connections with a nation which was originally part of ourselves. Even the Finns still occupy a

place in our heart, although we most emphatically disapprove of the course they pursued from 1941 until this autumn.

But the war has created new ties of friendship. The Norwegian of to-day is a fellow-fighter in the co-operating forces of free and democratic peoples; he feels himself closely attached to his brothers in arms and aims. His place is with the United Nations, and he hopes that the war-time collaboration between all those sovereign and separate States will continue in times to come. He has no objection to accept the joint leadership of the four present world Powers: the United States, the British Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and China. But within the framework of this mighty international body Norway cherishes one main aspiration: that she may be able to rebuild her decimated mercantile marine, thus remaining what she was when she entered this war of liberty: a Great Power on the sea.

The United Nations are a world-wide organisation. But not all international questions will assume universal character, and a common trend of thought favours the establishment of regional alliances to deal with regional problems. If such additional organisations should be set up as integral parts of the United Nations system with the common consent of the "big four," Norway will have to indicate which group she would find it natural to join. Her choice will, of course, be dependent on the magnitude of the would-be regional arrangements. To-day two alternatives are discussed.

If, in the first instance, the regional organisations are going to adopt dimensions of the highest order, Norway, having been an active Atlantic Power since the early Viking age, will have her self-evident place as a member of an Atlantic group. Such a constellation is generally depicted as comprising the United States, Great Britain and Canada, France, and all the smaller countries along the eastern coast of the ocean, Portugal included. To Norway the advantage of a closer connection with the United States and Canada would be obvious. The "Atlantic policy" is, therefore, advocated from the Norwegian side; our present Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Trygve Lie, has been its most prominent Norwegian champion.

Should, however, the regional agreements be subject to hemispherical limitations, a North Sea group, consisting of Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway seems to be the most natural outcome of the organisation difficulties. With the exception of Great Britain, all these countries have been overrun and occupied by the Germans; they have a common basis in tragic experiences; during the occupation they have regarded Great Britain as their foremost champion; for years their Governments and administrative committees have enjoyed British hospitalities; they belong, naturally, to a group in which Great Britain, in collaboration with her Empire, will be the strongest partner. Economically, the North Sea Powers have few conflicting interests, whilst their exports to a great extent supplement each other. Last but not least, together with Russia, Poland and Czechoslovakia, every one of the North Sea Powers would be in the first line of democratic resistance if ever the Germans grew strong enough to wage a war of revenge.

Thus, Norway is certainly willing to play her part within a regional team of democratic nations. But she was a strong supporter of the League of Nations, and belief in a universal organisation for the promotion of such interests as are common to all peoples is still alive among Norwegians. In spite of all war interruptions, a technical and cultural universalising of mankind is proceeding. We hope that international policy, at long last, will follow the trend of the progressing human spirit!

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